

THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

As by Authority of the
Convocation of the Clergy of Great Britain
in the Synod of Dort

Printed by W. Stansfeld, Printer to the Queen

Common Prayer

OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND

With the Administration of the Sacraments,
and other Rites and Ceremonies,
as they are now used in the Church of England

By Authority of the Convocation of the Clergy of Great Britain

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OF THE

DISCOURSE

To provide for the better
Education of the Poor in the
City of London
By the Rev. John Dodsworth, Minister of the Gospel
in the Parish of St. Dunstons, in the City of London.

CONTRACT

OF THE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
Wherein the same is shewn
that the same is necessary
and expedient for the
better Education of the Poor
in the City of London.

By William Dodsworth, Minister of the Gospel
in the Parish of St. Dunstons, in the City of London.

Printed by J. Sturges, at the Sign of the Anchor, in the Strand, near the Temple.

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(Church-yard) 1681.

CONSIDERED

TO THE
Most Noble, and Right Honourable
PATRIOTS,

THE
Lords, Knights, and Gentlemen, Justices of
the Peace for the County of
BEDFORD.

Right Honourable,



Receiving a command from your Honour,
met together at your Quarter-Sessions
House in Bedford, Oct. 2. for the publick
reading of the Liturgy of the Church of
England, which hath been, and still is
looked upon (by some) as the trouble of
our Zion, and great misfortune of our Is-
rael, being sentenced before tried, as Pa-
trist and Antichristian; Antichristian, because Ancient, and Pa-
trist, because Orthodox; I was bounden conscience by that duty
that I owe to God, and to his Church, to follow away that duty,
and to wash away that filth, which by such men and Antichristian
persons, had been cast upon that Book, whereby it was made
to the eyes of the weak and ignorant, before I could own it, as
my way conducing to the edification of the Church, which hath
been granted by my publishing of it.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Enabling myself to grapple with, and in some sort to resist that brutish force, (I must so call it since it is irrational) and which I forgive, I should be afflicted with in yielding obedience to your Honours commands in this particular, give a being to these few lines, which at this time with all humility I present unto you, hoping that you will give protection to this tender plant, not yet ten dayes old, since your Order was the sole and only cause of its production. I come to your Honours Court, as a Court of equity, not doubting but that Common Law would do me Justice, but hoping that your graver Judgements will give a quick hearing to this suit, since it is so cleir, and I be dismissed without long attending, if at your Bench it ples for the Defendant, I shall not be troubled, though in a corner passionate men commence a suit against me.

EPI T

Worthy Sirs, there are two evil Spirits, walking at this time through the Land, first uniting both our private houses, and our publick Temples, disturbing both our Church and State; the one is of looseness and prophaneness, the other is of riddiness and servileness: which must be conjured, and that suddenly; assaulted, and that undauntedly; both from our hirations of Justice, and Mount:ins of Holiness. Be not afraid of their faces, nor dismayed at their looks, Ezek. 2. 6. may be a fit *Memorandum* both for our Princes, and for our Levites; both for your Honours Benches, and our Pulpits; our Dread Sovereign hath sharpened the Axe for the one, and you great Sirs, must lay it at the root of the Tree. You cannot but remember that it must be the fear of God in our Land, that must turn our *Spears into Scharps, and our Swords into Pruning-hooks*. Your Honours are Justices of the Peace, and your practice is to keep the Kings peace; let not Warre be proclaimed against heaven, lest there be free Trade, ever kept with that Kingdom, and we need not fear what our enemies can do against us. One Frederick, a Duke of Saxony (as I have read) proclaiming Warre against the Archbishop of Magdeburgh, appointed one to go to his Court, to inform him of the nature of the Archbishops preparations for an Invasion, and finding that the Bishop made only God his Associate, gave over his design, with this advice to the World, *Alina insaniat ut bellum inferat ei qui confidit se Deum ad se forem habiturum*. You have Right Honourable, a happy opportunity both jointly and severally, to stop
that

The Apostolic Dedication

that foundation of prophaneſſe, which ſeems to overflow the ſtrongest Bulwarks and Banks that can be made or call up againſt it; by a ſevere putting in execution thoſe Laws that for that kind are made and provided. As for that other ſpirit, Noble Sirs, we may divide it into two ſorts: It cauſes ſome, out of petulancy and forwardneſſe, to oppoſe the beſt Laws, except ſuch as are made by themſelves, or for themſelves, or by thoſe who are of the ſame judgement with themſelves; they are fiery and eccentricall in their motion; through the overflowings of their gall they ſpeak bitter words, even againſt Dignities they bring railing accuſations; like fiery Comets they predict ſome ſignal fatality to that Country where in they are, and ſome future judgement to that place over which they hang. They are ſuch, that though favour be ſhown them, they will deal perverſely. Clemency (to vitious and cholericke are their conſtitutions) like honey, will but increaſe their diſtemper. Theſe, Sirs, muſt be obſerved, and ſuch mad ſpirits muſt be bound, or charmed, or extirpated out of the bounds of a Chriſtian Common-wealth. From the Bench the States-Law muſt be read with all Authority to them, and put in execution with a moderate ſeverity upon them. From the Pulpits they muſt hear with all boldneſſe, the neceſſity that lies upon them, to deny principallities and powers, leſt they be delivered over unto Satan, that they may learn not to ſaturne and forget to curſe either God or the KING. Your Honours may be very inſtrumental for making us to lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godlineſſe and honeſty, by making Application of that Doctrin, Ezra 7. 26. *Whether ſoever will not do the Law of thy God, and the Law of the King, let judgement be ſpeedily executed upon him, whether it be unto Death, or to Banishment, or to Conſiſcation of goods, or Imprisonment.*

There are others, Right Honourable, who purely (out of ignorance) are drawn from their obedience, and are, as it were, maddgiddy, flaggering through the Doctrin in killed into them, by thoſe above-mentioned; who out of a well-minded zeale, though not well-grounded, follow that light that ſuch hold out; and by a holy fear and care to avoid ſinning, boggle at the juſt demands of Supreme Authority; diſputing rather for the time with their own conſciences, than at any time againſt His Majesties Injunctions, deſiring to know how to keep their conſciences void of offence, not only towards men, but towards God, in reference
chief

The Epistle Dedicatory.

chiefly to Church-services, Divine performances, and outward Ceremonies. If such, Right Honourable, be presented before you, (you may easily know them) as transgressors of the Law, they are to be handled with all meekness; lenitive medicaments had best be prescribed for the curing of their distempers: Let them alone my Lords, this year also, and we will dig about them, inform them of the nature of things, and they may by beholding our Order, bring forth the fruit of obedience; we must behold them as if our selves were also in the body. In the other case, *Fine Justitia*, but in this, *Imitescat equitas vestra*.

Knowing, Right Honourable, that *Veritas parit odium*, truth begets hatred, and hatred begets contention, I come to your Persons as Preservers of the Peace, desiring, that this innocent creature that lately spoke in defence of your Honours, because of your Laws, and set its face against that calumny, which though not personally, yet virtually is cast upon you, for being instrumental in so publick a way for the putting in execution those Laws that have been made touching the using of the Service-Book, that it, if any, might be preserved from hurt, and freed from abuse: I put it into your hands, as into the hands of its Father, for indeed you begot it through the Law, I bore it through the Gospel; the information and instruction of that sort of people, that hath been deluded by self-seeking men, (robbing the Ancients of all glory, that alone they might have the Kingdom) next your Honours Order, was the sole cause of my preaching, and now publishing of these sheets. Praying that you may be in Counsels prosperous, and in peace glorious, happy Instruments of Gods glory, His Majesties honour, this Kingdoms prosperity, and this Countie's Piety,

I subscribe my self,

From my
Study at
Leighton,
Octob. 12.
1660.

Right Honourable Lords and

Gentlemen, Yours so commended
in all things lawful,

WILL. ANNS.

To the Reader

Courteous and Christian Reader,



OR in charity I am bound to suppose (until the contrary appear and be known) That thou hast in thy hand the summe and substance of two Sermons, With some alteration, preached October 7. At which time (the Lord knows) there was nothing farther from my thoughts, than that ever they should have seene the light more, or to have

craved thy courteous acceptance in the Land of the living; but to have them had lyen perpetually buried among the rest of their brethren, in a *Barren Coffin*; but there they had not long bene, when they were awakened with the sound of a Trumpet. Out of thy ingenuity aske me not why I appear in the World; since I am not pleased, though not ashamed to discover. If thou beest not one of my Parishioners, they were never ordained for thee; entertain them; as thou hast them without further questioning me concerning them. If there be any that snarle at my doctrine; yet if they answer not the Arguments, never like my Book the worse, nor esteeme them the wiser for their so doing.

I am not ignorant that there are as great diversities in mens judgments concerning Books, as there are in mens paltates concerning cheefe. If this small Tract relish not with thee, let it alone, raile not at it. Others possibly may close a good dinner with it, and go to their work chearfully, having sanctified their meat by a holy using of a set forme of Prayer.

For thy encouragement know, that my Book tells no lyes; it says indeed that Common Prayer is lawfull, yea, and proves it so; I have a small acquaintance with Counsellors and Fathers, yet they are not brought in, to witnesse to the truth, pleaded for; from which I was kept not only by my small standing in Controversie of this nature, but chiefly from the opposite parties excepting against such witness. The Authority of a Council being equal-

To the Reader.

Is regarded with respect to that of the Conclude; and to give a
 Father, who is the Father of the Church, himself. But from Scrip-
 ture it is manifestly evident, that it is not lawful
 for Gods own people to call upon him for mercy in a set forme of
 Prayer; which proofs, if you accept, and without prejudice en-
 tertain, and hereafter acknowledge them as lawful to any, though
 necessary for none; And though thou never use a set forme thy
 self, yet if thou condemn not them that do, I have my end. Give
 God the glory, and the poor members of Christs Church thy cher-
 ity; thou shalt have his prayers at the Throne of Almighty God,
 who is called

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PANEM QUOTIDIANUM.

HOSEA 14. 2.

Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, and say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips.



His Prophet is the first of those that are called the *lesser* or the *smaller Prophets*; not from their Authority which is equally great to the other, but from their bulk and quantity wherein they are much less; all of them together being but one Chapter longer than the Prophet *Isaiah* alone. Some have noted, that *Isaiah* in his single Book hath more verses than all the twelve smaller Prophets together.

Hosea receiving a Message from God, according to direction communicates the Lords mind to the Church of *Israel* in this Prophecie three ways.

1. By Types, representing *Israels* sad condition by reason of Idolatry, and *Israels* gracious restauration by reason of mercy, Chap. 1. 2, 3.
2. By powerful Sermons, reciting their sins against God, and predicting judgements from him, from Chap. 9. to the 14.
3. By gracious and soul-reviving promises touching the future happy estate of that sinful, yet beloved people, throughout this Chapter.

In which the Prophet having set before their eyes the several and particular sins of their Kings, Priests, Princes, and people, and the judgements that God was resolved to send upon each of these for their so offending, comes to perswade them betimes to break off their sins, and shun heavy judgements by their speedy turning from their sin, and returning to their God, *verse 1.* assuring them, that he hath not so farre yet shute up his tender mercy, but that if they return, he will heal their back-slidings, and love them freely, and refreshing them with his favourable presence, will be like the dew, and by his power sustaining them, they shall flourish as the Lilly, *vers. 3, & 4.* And helping their infirmities in order to their so doing; or Answering the Objections that they might make, fearing the issue of their returning, inasmuch as they might not know what Sacrifice God would accept, or with what words he would be intreated, he prescribes them to take words, and these words, *Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.*

In which we have these things observable.

1. The Prophets Exhortation to the people, *Take with you words.*
2. His Direction of the people, *Say, Take away all iniquity, &c.*

In his Exhortation there are these things observable.

1. The substance of it, which is, *To turn to the Lord.*
2. The manner of it, or how they must turn; is by saying these words, *Say unto him.*

In the Direction, which is it self a Prayer instituted by the Prophet for them, and given by the Prophet to them, there is

1. A Supplication to be made by all, for the removing the sins of all, of what person or degree soever, *Take away all iniquity.* It was sin that first brought down judgements from God, and therefore sin must first be removed by God.
2. There is an Intercession of all for each other; and of every one for all; Every single person desires that God would be favourable to his Brother, as he desires God to be merciful to himself, *Receive us graciously.*
3. There is a Covenant condition, or promise made of all, That if God will receive them, they will render to him praises,

called

called the calves of their lips: so will we render the calves of our lips, which is a giving thanks to his Name, Heb. 13. 15. In this promise, every one engageth for himself, and each man becomes a Surety for his Brother, so will we render; and because, *optima penitentia est nova vita*, they will trust no more to the work of their own hands, but in God only, as fatherless children have hope, and from him only, when they are in want, expect mercy, in the following words, *Ashur shall not save us, &c.*

We shall let pass many truths that might arise from the substance and method of this Prayer appointed to, and given by this Holy Prophet for the people, to collect and cull out one that makes for the clearing up of that truth, to the obeying of which we are by Authority now commanded; and from which, we are by Turbulent spirits eagerly dehorted: (*viz.*) Touching the lawful use of the *Common-Prayer-Book*, established in *England* by all Legal Power since the Reformation: A Book which hath been often Crucified among and between Thieves, yet never could be put to death by them.

The Doctrine is this: That Gods best Servants, or his peculiar people, may lawfully use Set Forms of Prayer in their approaches to him; and begging blessings of him.

To him that reads this Text with understanding, this observation needs no farther proof nor debate: yet I shall not impose a belief of it upon any, until that I have

1. Shewed what the nature of a Set Form of Prayer is.
2. Whether such a Form may lawfully be used.
3. Whether such a Form is decent or comely for a Saint to use.
4. Whether (granting all this) it be expedient for a Saint, or for the Church now as it is constituted and increased, to use such a Form.
5. At what seasons this Form is chiefly to be used.
6. In what place it is most expedient to use this kind of Form.

7. Answer some Objections that are urged against such a Form. *J. H. Smith* and others have said that such a Form is not to be used.

All which, if God permit, we shall handle in these seven several Sections, briefly and plainly.

LET us in the first place see what the nature of a Set Form of Prayer is; and that may be done by this description.

It is a *he* say calling upon God in the name of Christ, in words prescribed by another, or premeditated by our selves for the reminding of judgements, or receiving of mercies from, or for our selves and others.

In all these points it agrees to; and holds affinity with other prayers of what kind soever; In this, that it calls upon God through Christ, in using the words which have been either recommended to us, as the *Lord's Prayer*, *Luke 11. 2.* Or, 2. Prescribed by another, and enjoined to us; as *David* required his Subjects the *Levites*, to praise the Lord in a publick Assembly, for the bringing home of the Ark, in the words of that *Psalme* which he had composed for the same purpose. It was the first *Psalme*, as it appears, that ever he publicly gave for the use of his people in the Temple or Sanctuary, *1 Chron. 16. 4, 6, 7, 8, 3.*

Or, 3. Such as hath been premeditated by us for our own use, and as occasion served, used of us: And such was the prayer of the *Prodigal*, *Luke 15.* he sits down, and deliberates within himself what to say, that his father might again receive him. *I will arise (saith he) and go to my father (and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, &c. Ver. 18.* And at his coming to the father, used the same words before resolved upon: Such a prayer was also almost that of our Saviours, *Father, what wilt thou will, let this Cup pass from me;* which He uttered three severall times in His passion, *Mat. 26. 4.* And all this is done for the more orderly helping of us in our calling upon God.

Now some there are that say this is not to be done; That Christians in this clear Sun-shine of the Gospel, are not to give them-

themselves, or limit themselves this day, or this week, or this year, to that kind of prayer framed or composed by or for ourselves or others, last week, or last year, but hold it altogether sinful and unlawful.

Others there are, that suppose such prayers at some times (for none that ever I heard of, maintain them in all points, places, or in all times necessary, but only unlawful) to be good, and helps against their speaking anything rashly before God, and unduly with their lips, before him who will be worshipped in spirit and in truth; fearing lest they offering strange fire from the renders of their deceitful hearts, might bring fire from the Almighty to consume their souls. Supposing (and upon good grounds) that to come every day to Heaven is the same suit, may make us at last to be known for good Subjects, though not for great Gallants: And this opinion, from the Text is the substance of our observation: which to confirm, take these three substantial Witnesses: The first whereof shall be

1. *Joel* a Prophet of God: he commanding the people of *Judah* that grievously had fallen by their iniquity, to turn unto God: will have a *Trumpet blown in Zion*. *Joel* 2. 1. enjoining all to come to mourning and weeping for their sins and offences, makes a Set Form of prayer for, and prescribes a prayer to the Priests themselves, who are especially excited and enjoined to weep between the Porch and the Altar, and are commanded to say, Spare thy people O Lord, and give not thy heritage to reproach, *Joel* 2. 17. The second Witness is

2. *Moses* a man of God, *Exod* 15. where, after the people's delivery from *Egypt* slavery, and *Pharaoh's* bondage, and after they had seen the *Egyptians* dead upon the shore, not one of them being killed by them, *Moses* and *Israel* sing a Psalm of Thanksgiving. If it were enquired, Who made or composed that Song? it must be answered, *Moses*, by *Exod* 15. 1. and as a set Form used by the people. To say that the Spirit came at once upon all in one way, and prompted them all to one kind of words, were to affirm, That all the people were or had been Prophets, a thing hard to be proved, and harder to be believed. It was certainly a set Form composed by *Moses*, and sung in parts

parts by all the people, as in our Congregations now. It was al-
so sung by Miriam, and the Women, and that in Dances too,
which is an evident token, or sign, that a set Form is lawful;
for Miriam was a Prophetesse, Verse 20. The third Wit-
ness is

3. David a Saint of God, in that forementioned place, 1 Chron.
16. where, after that godly King, and Kingly Prophet, had brought
to his own House or City, the Ark of God, and put the Church in
Order, he composed a prayer to be used by the people, which
he put into the hands of Asaph, Verse 15. and in the close of it,
enjoins, by Divine instinct, and Royal Prerogative, the people
to say, *Save us O God of our salvation, and gather us to-
gether, and deliver us from among the Heathen.* Verse 16.
In the mouth of these three Witnesses, let this Truth be ju-
stified,

SECT. II.

HAVING seen this kind of prayer briefly stated, we come now
to the lawfulness and reasonableness of its use. In all our ac-
tions there are that would have us answer these three questions to
our selves, and then to proceed according as the answer is
made. The Questions are these:

1. An *licet*, whether it be lawful for the substance.
2. An *decent*, whether it be proper or becoming the party that
performes it, And
3. An *expedit*, whether the thing to be done, be expedient
for him that goeth about to do it. We shall ask these questions con-
cerning this kind of Form. It's clear that we are bound to pray,
but whether in this or that gesture, in this or that habit, or in this
or that kind, is not so clear; but that a set form is lawful, appears
by these following Arguments.

Argum. 1. From that competent and sufficient supply which
it brings in against those general infirmities that are ge-
nerally incident to the Common sort of Christians in their
approaches and addresses unto God. The Church of Christ

was never, nor is not now, without them that were weak and without them that were infirm; and according to the Churches infirmity, the Almighty suits his power, his love, his grace and bounty, to babes he allows milk, to men of age he affords strong meat, All Christians cannot swim through the turbulent sea of their inward corruptions, nor outward temptations, without the help and assistance of such soul-saving bladders; neither are all able to runne, some must have crutches even to sustaine them in walking in those wayes that are called holy. At all times the heart of man is unwilling to do good, and like the wild Asses colt, strives most when it is held in by the bit and bridle, of good and wholesome Lawes; but most desperately deceitful, when it is brought before God in prayer, then the best men are aptest to be distracted, and the weak Christian hath his hopes of being heard, almost extinguished before he be upon his knees, through that inability and unfitness that he knows to be in himself at all times, and especially in that time, which makes God oftentimes go without his service, and it is to be feared, the poor creature without his blessing. There are three common infirmities attending the common sort of Christians, and a set forme of Prayer brings in, and furnishes him with suitable helps against them: as

1. It furnishes him with elocution against his barrennesse. There are that have rational souls within them, and yet in a common discourse, appear, as it were, without reason, not being able, though in things within their own sphere, to frame or find out words, to cause their minds to be understood to the eares of him with whom they so discourse; How shall they then be able to speak to the Lord, or for to cause the Almighty (I speak after their thoughts) who is a wise God, to understand what they would have of him, being confused within; and remaining mute without? Now a set forme of Prayer puts words in their mouths, layes them before his eye, whereby he is able in all humility to let God know the wants of his soul, at least in the lump, or in grosse, knowing that God is able to explain to himself the particulars of his misery, and in his good time to give a happy answer to those very words, which in sincerity be put up unto him.

2. It furnishes him with promptnesse against his dullnesse. There are many Christians even out of love with their own prayers, through the often breaking and dis-joynting, of their most fervent petitions, because they cannot pray smoothly and readily, they are apt

apt to neglect prayer wilfully and constantly. Now a set forme brings a suitable help to his malady, giving them such light, that promptly and readily it causes them to make their requests known to him, who without a hearty asking hath not promised to give, and without this help they would not have boldnesse to aske; supposing that because they love not such prayers, neither from themselves, nor others, that God loves them not when he hears them from others or themselves.

3. It furnishes him with knowledge against his ignorance: The members of the Church are not only at a losse in not knowing how to pray, but sometimes what to pray for; they are ignorant possibly of the necessity of asking the Kingdom of heaven first, if they would be answered in those things that concern the Kingdom of this world, *Matth. 6. 33.* They may forget, or do not reckon of the afflictions of *Joseph*, they know not how to frame or methodize their prayers, and because they were never learned, suppose they shall never be heard, so in a slothful way sitting down, ceasing from duty, concluding that ignorance will excuse them at the last, and therefore it may excuse them at the present. Now a set form teaches them distinctly how to pray, for all men, for Kings, and what blessings they want, for Ministers, for all Governours, for all that are in affliction; when to call for the graces of the spirit; how to enlarge upon sin original, how, and by what circumstances to aggravate sin actual; all which being known, may make them delight in that duty, which by reason of ignorance they are afraid of, lest a curse, and not a blessing follow, and attend their imperfect and ignorant supplications; which fear is taken away by their taking with them words.

2. Arg. Set forms of Prayer appear to be lawful, from those general mercies, which commonly and generally are craved by the Saints and members of the Church of God. Sometimes upon special occasions, and sudden and unexpected providences, the Saints with all diligence betake themselves to Gods throne, as the Lords promise to *David* concerning the building his house, made him presently to go and offer the calves of his lips, *2 Sam. 7. 17, 18.* and danger of drowning made the Disciple run hastily to Christ.

Yet there are ordinary seasons, wherein the Church goes frequently, demanding or begging mercies, which are not only commonly asked, but commonly granted: and they are either

1. *Spiritual mercies:* As for forgiveness of sin, for having our Covenant and interest in Christ renewed to us, for having our corruptions subdued in us, for his Fatherly love to shine upon us, and his Spirit to remain with us. 1. In a way of Direction. 2. In a way of Information. 3. In a way of Consolation: until the day of our death and dissolution.

2. *Temporal mercies:* As for our daily bread to be given daily to us, to be content with whatsoever portion doth befall us: that he might ever bless the fruits of the earth unto us: that he would bless the work hath been practised by us: and the calling he hath chosen for us. Coming daily unto God for those mercies that we daily want; there must be a reason given, why God should at the thrice coming, grow weary of our prayers, or loath our petitions, purely upon the account of his hearing them twice before, or I shall believe that coming daily for those mercies, I may daily begge them in the same expressions, since it is the holiness of the heart, and not the nimbleness of the tongue, that makes prayers accepted in the Court of Heaven, or made welcome before the face of God.

3. *Argum.* Set forms of Prayer seeme to be lawful from the common practice of the most eminent persons that in all ages have been acquainted with the mind of God. Who can know Gods mind better than those who were his friends? Who can know Gods thoughts better than he that came out of his bosome? *Joh. 1. 18.* We shall find in the Institution and Gubernation of Churches, set forms enjoyed and practised by God and his people.

1. Under the Law by the Priests of God, at the appointment of God the Father, *Numb. 6. 22.* Where God giving Lawes for the inbeing of that National Church, which he was then instituting, (*viz.*) of the Jewes; Thus saith God, *Aaron and his sons shall bless the people on this wise. The Lord bless thee and keep thee, the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace,* a most exact pattern and form of prayer which the High Priest must use in the audience of the Congregation; wherewith, and in which words, they are constantly to bless or pray for the people, whence ariseth the custom of Ministers under the Gospel, to bless the people in the like form of words before the dismissing of the Assembly, he that reads this, and observes it, may call it a *Common Prayer*.

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made by God, to be commonly used by the High Priest in his Service and worship.

2. It hath been practised and enjoyed by the Saints of God, under and after the Law, at the permission & allowance of God: as 1. By him whose heart was most like to Gods own heart, even David, of whose prayers, and *Prayers*, we read so often, concerning his sending them to the chief Musician, to him that excels, that they might be sung in the Temple; which to all the people, yea, to the priests themselves, was set formes of Prayers; and we know that even God pleased to communicate himself in the Sanctuary and Temple, in which they were sung, in extraordinary ways and manners to the people, particularly 2 Chron. 5:13. 4. Where the priests singing the Burthen of the 138. Psalm, *The glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord, so that the Priests could not stand to minister before him.*

2. By him whose life was strengthened out by God, even *Hezekiah*. Like him there was no King in Israel, before, neither was there any after him; having a lease of his life granted him at his praying. After his coming to the throne of the Kingdom, he immediately went about the reformation of the Church, which at that time was in great desolation, through the impiety of King *Ahaz*, and having cleansed the Temple, and the offerings which the King commanded should be made for a reconciliation with God for all the people; and having appointed the Levites to stand in the house of the Lord, with their Psalteries, and Harps, he and his Princes, by his royal Prerogative, and their Counsels, commanded the Levites, such power have Magistrates in Church affairs) to sing praise to the Lord, with the words of David, and of Asaph the Seer, not leaving them to their own abilities, nor parts; and as obedient subjects to their Sovereigns command, they sang with joy and gladness, bowing down their heads and worshipped, 2 Chron. 29. 30. And indeed in all lawful things, what pleaseth the King, ought to please all the people: the words of David, and of Asaph, was without question a set form to the people, and to the Priests likewise, who might have abilities and parts of their own to furnish them with matter for praising the Lord; after their own mind and pleasure; but *Hezekiah* and the Princes commanded otherwise, and these held it their duty to give obedience.

After the destruction of the Temple, and after the Babylonish captivity at the building of the second Temple, we shall find by *Zerubbabel* that dear Saint of God, the use of set forms, *Ezra* 3.

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3. Set forms are enjoyed by God the Son in the time of the Gospel, Luke 11. 2. in which place the Apostle Urging and desiring our Saviour (according to the practice of John to his Disciples) to teach them to pray, that they might not be behind John's followers in serving, who were so farre before them in a master; our Saviour though he had not given them the Holy Ghost, yet charges them when they pray, to say, *Our Father*; & so which we are no more to doubt of its being done by them, or said of them, than we are to doubt of their baptizing in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, though we read of neither. Surely Christ knew the mind of his Father to the full, even in this point of a Set Form, since the fulness of the God-head dwelt bodily in him, Col. 2. 9. And indeed by them, who are set against Set Forms, this Set Form of our Saviours is set aside; sure upon no other account, since it is Scripture; but because it is a Set Form. Proud Souls, who by a counterfeite humility before God, would thus affront the Son of God, by casting out this savory Prayer as unprofitable, because it is a Set Form! as if their own extemporary ejaculations were better worth hearkning to than that that is composed by Christ, and recommended to his Church upon deliberate meditation. But verily, verily I set off their arrogancy, wherever the Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole World that prayer that he hath made, shall be used for a memorial of him.

4. Set Forms have been used by an holy Apostle in the Church of God: What was spoken by holy men of Old, was spoken by the Holy Ghost. And indeed the *Prayer* (as it is called) 2. *Thim.* 2. 17. concerning the mark and more that he gives all his Epistles, to make them the more assured, or to get in them a greater faith touching the truth of what he writ, or certainty of that that he had written: the mark it self was a *salutation*, a prayer used in every Epistle: It is this, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all*; and this prayer indeed is the close of every Epistle: As, *Rom.* 16. 24. *1 Cor.* 16. 23. *2 Cor.* 13. 14. *Gal.* 5. 18. *Ephes.* 6. 24. *Phil.* 4. 23. *Col.* 4. 18. *1 Thes.* 5. 28. *1 Tim.* 6. 21. *2 Tim.* 4. 22. *Titus.* 3. 15. *Phile.* 21. Doth not the Holy Ghost, constantly using this Form, declare, that a set form of prayer is no hindrance in the close, so long as frequently in the entry of every Epistle, as this prayer put up by

the same Spirit, Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ! To all that know that there is a Holy Ghost, the lawfulness of this practice may by this be known.

Argum. 5. Set Forms of prayer hath been, and still are used in and by all the Churches of the Saints, our enemies themselves (for many of them) being contented therewith. It hath been, and is now the Universal practice of the whole body of the Catholick Church in all Ages, present and past, and commanded for the future, to use set forms. Suppose a Christian Congregation were singing *Psalm 6. 1.* *I will not be angry with thee, O Lord,*

Lord, in thy wrath reprove me not,

Though I deserve thine ire,

Ne yet correct me in thy rage,

O Lord, I thee desire:

would not all that heare them know, and might not all that understand them, say, That they were using a Set Form of prayer? And what is more frequent in the Churches of the Saints, and what was more usual in the Congregations, than to sing praise to the Lord in Songs composed by others? It is true, the first singing we read of, was in the dayes of *Moses*, *Exod. 15.* a prayer being there composed by some holy man, in all probability *Moses*, *Revell. 15. 3.* and used by the whole people in praising God. Yet as we are not to suppose that the Fathers before the Flood, kept no Sabbath, nor they after the Flood, knew not or kept not the Seventh day, holy, though we read of none untill *Moses*, so neither are we to suppose that the Saints in those dayes were without this eminent point of worship, as Singing; and yet if they were, we know that that part of the Church now under the Gospel, universally useth it, both privately and publicly, and by *Saint Paul* we are enjoined so to do, *Coloss. 3. 18.*

Argum. 4. Set Forms seem to be lawful, for whatever is required for the sanctifying of a prayer by God, may be found in a Set Form of him. It is not the word that God regards, he takes prayers by weight, and not by measure, as he takes no delight in

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the legs of a man, neither is he satisfied with the tongue of a man; he regards the fixedness of the heart, and not the variety of the expression.

Now there are three graces that God requires in every prayer, without which no prayer is accepted; and with which no prayer, shall be rejected: As

1. *Faithfulness or sincerity*; we must pray in faith, if ever we would obtain in truth, *James 1. 6.* we must lift up pure hands without wrath, and without doubting; *no* set form of prayer may be sent up to heaven with a great deal of faith; and if it hath faith, though but as small as a grain of mustard-seed, it shall not miscarry: Did not Christ pray in faith, when he cried thrice to his Father, *that the Cup might pass from him*? was not *Paul* a sinner? did not his heart say *Amen*, when his Pen writ so often, *Grace and Peace be with you*? Was not the *Prodigal* in his prayer to his Father, strong in faith? and was he not heard in what he prayed, yea in more than he prayed for? which argues that his prayer was mixed with abundance of faith, and sincere acknowledgement of his sin.

2. Men must pray with *earnestness*, or *feelingly*; there must be a fervency in the breast, an earnest desire for the obtaining of that they pray for, or for the removing of that they pray against. How earnestly will a poor afflicted soul upon a Road, beg an Alms of the Passenger, and will with as much earnestness beg of another, and to both use one kind of Petition? Let any put their hands to our Saviours sides in the Garden, and put their fingers to his brow, and they will feel blood coming out of his flesh, surely denoting the earnestness of the soul that was within. How feelingly doth the Prodigal pray, that he might be but admitted as a servant to his Fathers house, since he is *no more worthy to be called a son*! He knows it is better to be his Fathers servant, than his own Master; and if a man look the space between the *Porch and the Altar*, *Joel 2. 17.* he shall see it wet with the tears of them that are praying in a set form.

3. Men must pray with *submissiveness and humility*; in this grace a set form hath an eminent excellency; the gift of extemporary fluency may even puff up (I speak not this in opposition to the thing.) Mens hands may even tremble when they pray, *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*: See Christ

Christ prostrating himself upon the ground; and he is a Witness of this. To conclude, if grace might not be in the heart in the time of using a set form, that of St Paul, *Colossians 3: 16* where he would sing Psalms with grace in their hearts, might be in vain.

Argum. 3. It seems it is lawful to use a set form of prayer, for the Church in the vision of God is shown (to the Divine) making use of, and using in heaven, a set form of prayer. *Revel. 15: 3.* If Heaven here be taken for the seat of the blessed, the New Jerusalem the seat of God, then a *unique ad mirum*, we argue, What's done by that part of the Church *Triumphans* above, may lawfully be done by that part that is *Militans* beneath. If by Heaven here be signified the Church, as it often in this Book doth, then it holds out the same truth; the song are two: First, the song of the Lamb, of which we have only a negative description, showing its excellency; *Revel. 14: 3.* And Secondly, the song of *Moses*, of which we have a large Narration, *Exod. 18.* However it be, set forms being in Heaven, holds out

10. 1. That God is contented with, and delighted in such a form. Nothing is in Heaven, but what the mind and goodness of God to the highest degree is satisfied with and by. God therefore, whose eye cannot behold the least iniquity, and whose soul is wholly inclined, and universally a lover of that that is good, would not suffer that to be in Heaven, which is not lawful to be done upon earth. By saying therefore, that this is in Heaven; it doth declare, that God loves and delights in such a way, or that he would not admit them to be used so near himself, nor the use of them in his Holy Temple.

10. 2. That there is some eminency, and high excellency in such a form. Nothing is in Heaven but what is gloriously excellent; its Walls, and Gates, and Streets, are wholly excellent; and in the vision so described; *Revel. 21: 3.* And in Scripture the excellency of a thing is so much the more, by so much as it approaches towards heaven. Sure then a set form may be excellent, since after *Moses*'s death it was sung by the heavenly Quire. And here by this we may see that *Moses* was the Author of that Song; and therefore a set form for the people;

It holds out, that there may be strong desires, and ardent affections in such a form; what the Saints do in Heaven, is out of infinite joy and unconceivable delight, which so fills the soul, that eternity it self is short enough for them to deliver the raptures that in abundance of spiritual complacency possess their soul, in those everlasting enjoyments that with God they receive above; their affections being turned up to the highest pin, and utmost line of the creatures possibility; and in that extasie singing a set Form, must needs denote that ardent and vehement zeal may possess a Saint in the using such a Form: All these three are held out to us, by saying that this song is in heaven. To conclude this Section, set Forms of Prayer seem to be lawful, since they are Heavenly; and Heavenly, since they are used in the Kingdom of Heaven. And so much for the first question, *An liceat*, whether set forms be lawful, yea, or no.

SA 7. III.

THE Second Question is, *An decet*, whether this set form of praying to God is comely and decent, or suitable for him that is a Christian; or whether it becomes a soul in coming to the infinite God, to come often and aways in the same kind of words; whether this doth not take away some reputation either from him that prays, or from the Gospel he professes, or from God whom he prays to, or from the Spirit of God whom he seems to pray by. It is answered in the Negative; It is not uncomely, nor undecent, neither doth diminish the respect which ought to be had to, nor the honour that ought to be given to the great God for these Reasons: As.

1. *Res.* It becomes the Saints that now are to walk in the foot-steps of those Saints that have gone before them to the inheritance of the Kingdom, Heb. 6. 12. Whose steps shall we walk in, if we decline theirs? where the Saints of God have ever walked, we may easily discover the foot-steps of a set form; and there holy actions are recorded in Scripture, not only for our information, but imitation. Nothing becomes a Saint better than to worship God; than to walk in that way wherein he sees eternally the Saints glorify God; and they again in their so doing,

doing, to be eternally glorified of God: Praise is comely for the upright, *Psalm 33. 1.* and to praise God in the words of *David*, took nothing from Gods glory, neither diminished *Hekiah's* righteousness. The *Prodigals* set form of prayer becomes him, as well as *Josephs* garments did, when he had cast off his prison garments, to come before *Pharaoh*; to write after *David's* Copy, becomes any royal Saint, and penitent sinner.

2. *Reas.* It becomes the Saints in speaking unto God, especially in prayer, orderly, readily, and promptly, to make their requests known unto him. In speaking to an earthly Prince; or grave Counsellour, it's decent and beautiful to have our thoughts so digested, and our words so composed, as promptly without hesitation or stammering, to express our thoughts, which both discourages him that speaks, and takes away something from the grandour of him spoken to; since we are not careful how to demean our selves as suits to his greatness. Now mens broken and insignificant expressions, especially in publick, is a great discouragement to the speaker, and indeed seems to bring in contempt the Majesty of that God they come before; making that duty the cause of peoples mirth, which ought to be the cause of their zeal and fear, through their often impertinencies and stumblings, all which is prevented by this set form: For, by this having his words, petitions, phrases, well and orderly compiled, makes all that hear him, know that he is sensible of that Majesty that he comes before, and holiness and wisdom of that God he speaks to, in offering the best of his store, ever studying acceptable words, as the Preacher doth, *Eccles. 12. 10.* and not the blind, and the lame.

3. *Reas.* It becomes them in prayer to use the words unto God the Father, that have been recommended to, and enjoyned them by God their Saviour. What better language can fit; or what words more takingly can enter into the eares of the Lord, than those words that have been prescribed to us by him who always pleased him? *Matth. 3. 17.* and therefore when he commanded this, can our inventions make more melodious sounds in the eares of God, than his Sons meditations? In a word, what can become us better, than humbly to sit down and learn of him who was the wisdom of the Father; and that all other learning may do us good, let us learn, let us learn to say, *Our Father which art in heaven.*

4. *Reas.*

4. *Reas.* It becomes them in all their addressees unto the only wise God, to help their natural infirmities by those means that have been used by the Saints of God in the time of their acceptance with him. The *Prodigal* made not only a prayer, but was heard in the praying, and accepted after the same prayer made. In an extraordinary manner Christ himself was heard in his form of prayer; though not every way according to his desire, for the *Cup* passed not from him, but *an Angel came and strengthened him*, Luke 22. 43. There are several infirmities lie upon the common and weak Christian, which presse him down so sore, that of himself he is both unable and unwilling to open his lips to God in a praying manner. Now for that man to use such helps as he hath seen used by others, that he may be able to make straight paths for his feet, is not unseemly, especially since he in whom wisdom dwells, hath left us both Precept and Pattern so to do.

5. *Reas.* It becomes them in all their addressees unto God, to be humble, and not too presumptuous in their own abilities (and those often times but in conceit only.) whether natural or acquired. Even in prayer a man may be too rash with his mouth, and speak unadvisedly with his lips: It is a pity, that some men will venture a fall so rashly as they do, since they may safely and lawfully use *Stiles*, prescribing a form for themselves, or limiting the main Ingredients of their Sermons, or Petitions. Is it fit to say to the Almighty, *What dost thou?* or, *Why is it thus?* serve him we must, but ever with reverence and godly fear, Heb. 12. 28. It becomes a Saint to pray, as well as to walk circumspectly; for God is in Heaven, and he is on Earth. And so much for the 2^d question, *An decept.*

SECT. IV.

THE third question is, *An expedite*, granting set forms in themselves lawful, yet are they expedient? those set forms might be made in the time of the Churches Ignorance, and to use them now, may seem to set us to School again. Shall we always be children? shall we use standing stools, now we are grown men? But, consider

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That the Church hath always young coming in, and old going out. It hath Babes upon the Breast; and of a bigger size; it doth not consist all of grown men. All the aged in his age may want the same Food, the Child hath in his Child-hood: for their sakes set Forms of prayer may be counted necessary.

2. Consider, that though thou and I, and an hundred more, may pray, and do pray smoothly and readily; and walk strongly; yet there are many that cannot; and therefore it is expedient that there be help for them; and if the Father or Master of the Family will have us to take of the Childrens Messe, let us not be sorry; and since there are many weak and infirm, we ought to teach them how to hold their Crutches, and then we may go whither our discretion will lead us. If it be therefore asked, Whether it be expedient in this Age of the Church, to use set forms of prayer? I Answer in the Affirmative; my Reasons are such as these.

1. *Reas.* It is expedient (especially in publick) that the poorest Saint, as well as the greatest, understand what they say themselves, or what they hear from others. How many a poor Christian cannot apprehend the nature of a common discourse, without two or three times going it over, before their understanding can receive the thing spoken of; so as to judge or determine whether it be right or wrong? Some are not able, no not in their understandings, to follow a ready or a smooth-tongued Preacher; they know not the terms of a prayer, nor the parts of a prayer; they may say *Amen* to that, that in this case would damn them; and they themselves make such bawls in their prayer, that they are at a stand as concerning themselves. Now by their often hearing, or using a set form, they are able to apprehend the Scope and the Order of the Prayer in that Form composed.

2. *Reas.* It is expedient that prayers (publick chiefly) be so ordered, qualified, and seasoned, that the generality at least, may cheerfully and feelingly say *Amen*. As there are in our Congregations diversities of heads, differing in colour; so there may be, and too frequently are diversities of judgements differing in affection. It is possibly true for that, that I pray against. Now set forms are so composed, as that the general part of Christians

joins in and to the praying of it; that is therefore expedient to be done, or at least to be asked, that the generality of the Church wishes to obtain, and fits, as it were, the most of those peoples hearts, that at any time are met together for the good of the whole. That all may say feelingly, *Amen, Amen*; unto which doing, a set form of prayer in these dividing times, is a sovereign help and motive.

3. It is expedient, That in the Churches of Christ the Saines of smaller parts, have such helps as may not discourage their devotion, or damp their faith. All the Members of the Church are not cedars; there are some lesser, some smaller in the Mount than others. They must be dealt withal so that they be not over-driven, lest they die. A poor soul conscious to himself, that he is not able to make his requests known in so ready a way as others, grows sad, and being full of doubts about his eternal condition upon the account of his insufficiency, goeth with gray hairs and with sorrow to the grave. He sees a full-grown Christian skipping over Hills, and leaping over Mountains, and he himself not able to walk, he may cry, *O wretched man that I am!* Now to such a soul as this, set forms of prayer may make him see and speak of his imperfections, and the self-same prayer make him confess them, and be humble for them; which is a great part of perfection; and assure him, that though he came late to, yet he shall not be the least in the Kingdom of Heaven.

4. It is expedient, That strong men bear with, and put their hand to help the infirmities of the weak. Forasmuch as the Church of Christ will be on earth as fishes are in the Sea, the great ones will devour the lesser. If the Horseman Army, be not well guided, they may spoil the order of the Infantry. All things must be done to edifying. And *changing heareth all things*. 1 Cor. 13. 7. Here is a poor man cannot pray, teach him to pray, that were by Books, and though he learn, there is still a young generation coming up, that must be taught how to pray, even as Jesus taught their Disciples, *their Angels to hold the feet of him that treadeth which is in heaven*, Mat. 18. 10. This expedient therefore we have set forms always in the Church, as helps always ready for such as are going out of the Church, and such as are coming in.

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HAVING gone thus far into the nature of set forms of prayer, we come now unto two Circumstances concerning the use of them: The first shall be when this set form chiefly may be used: Circumstances of time and place may alter even the nature of things; and therefore the second circumstance shall be, Where they ought chiefly to be used: It may be lawful for me to do that now, or this day, which will not be lawful to morrow; and I may do that with a safe conscience in one place, which without sin I cannot do in another. When therefore chiefly may this set form be used; since it is always lawful, and never in it self necessary.

Answe. It may be used of all when all are partakers of, and sufferers under the same judgement; their case here in the Text; all had sinned, and were like to come short of the glory of God; each had a hand in pulling down judgement; and here they are exhorted, to have and use the same words to keep away vengeance. When a whole Nation, a Countrey, a Town, and a Family, feels all the same Rod, certainly it is proper for them all to use the words. If a Nation were under the judgement of a Death, or Famine, nay suppose a Plague; for that Nation, at a set time, appointed by Authority, and every one in that Nation at that time to be praying, or using that set form of prayer appointed in the Common Prayer (viz.)

Now Almighty God, which in thy wrath in the time of King David, didst slay with the plague of Pestilence, shirescore and ten thousand; and yet remembering mercy, didst save the rest, have pity upon us miserable sinners, that now are visited with great sickness and mortality; that like us then thou didst command thine Angel to cease from punishing, so it may now please thee to withdraw from us this plague, and grievous sickness, through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.

This I say, in a general relation to be generally used, in both proper and seasonable; and as God both in Jer. 2. 17. and here,

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did behold his people with his mercy, and heal their Land; so might he be also reconciled to that people, through the hearty pouring forth of their souls before him in the using of that set form.

2. *Answer.* It may be used, when all generally are partakers of the same present mercies, or would be partakers of the benefits of future blessings. When our Kingdoms peace and happiness consists next under God in His Majesties Person, it's fit for all true Christians, and all Loyal Subjects, at once or in an houre to be praying, *O Lord, save the King*; and this being all the Land over, must needs be effectual. When our *Oxen are strong for labour*, and our *sheep bring forth thousands in our streets*, when there is *no complaining in our gates*; then for that Kingdom at once to be praising His Name, as in the *Common Prayer*; *O most merciful Father*, which of thy gracious goodness hast heard the devout prayers of thy Church, and turned our dearth and scarcity into cheapness and plenty, we give thee most humble thanks for this thy especial bounty, beseeching thee to continue this thy loving-kindness unto us, that our Land may yield her fruits of increase, to thy glory, and our comfort, through Jesus Christ our Lord. May not Heaven be delighted at this Hymne so much the more, as the whole Nation in their severall Assemblies uses and sends up the same praises; as *Israel did*; *Exod. 15.* or as *Deborah did*, *Judg. 5.1.*

3. *Answer.* It may chiefly be used, when men are gathered into one place to worship in one way the great God; this is a fit time to pray for and with each other, to say, *O Lord, open thou our lips*, and our mouth shall shew forth thy praise, as our first meeting, is very meet and proper. When we come to the great Congregation, and those about us with lifted up voices, call, *Venite exultemus*, *O come, let us sing unto the Lord*, let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation; it is able to lift up the heart of him that is otherwise not taken with a sense of that Gods presence in whose House he now appears; and fills a Sear. One live Coal cast among many dead, may and will quicken many; so one sinners zeal may be enflamed with the zeal of that Christian that sits next him; and the practice of many in prayer, may rather provoke him than a single or silent Petitioner. The Angels and Church witness as one way of Thanksgiving in the heavenly.

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venly Kingdom, *Riv. 4. 11.* sure then the Saints may joyn in one, in the Kingdom of Heaven, even in the Assembly of the *Elect*, and with one mouth, since they are frail, may use this one Petition before they go, *O God, make clear our hearts within us, and take not thy Holy Spirit from us*; and that without sin, and without offence.

4. *Ans.* It ought to be done, when it is enjoined by Supreme Authority: There are some that are borne to be ruled; others are born to be Rulers: What Supreme Authority enjoins, is lawful, is to be obeyed if possible; this was the case with the *Lovers*, 2 Chron. 29. 30. the King and his Princes commanded them to *use the words of David*, unto which they yielded all obedience. God promises to give to his Church, *Kings for its Nursing Fathers, and Queens for its Nursing Mothers*. They ought therefore to look to all their Family, and provide food and rayment for the weak and infirm, and by some means remove the ignorance of them that are unlearned; if he command us to teach them to praise the Lord at such a time, and that in a set form, it's our duty to obey, though our parts and abilities were never so great or eminent; and since he commands it, let the greater serve awhile the less; and he that is old, for a small season teach him that is the younger; and if we that are grown in years, must eat of the childrens bread, by our Fathers direction (for such a one is every King), let us eat to it cheerfully, especially since the meat is wholesome; that it may be seen, we are not so much wedded to our irregular-pleasing humor, but that we can eat of any wholesome dish that is set before us, else how shall our moderation be known to all men?

SECT. VI.

THE second circumstance to be spoken of touching for forms of prayer, is, the place where they may be made. That that is lawful, may be done in any place that suits to the nature of the thing done. We shall not speak of this in an absolute or positive way; but by way of comparison only. And shall defend this conclusion, That set forms of prayer are rather to be used in public than in private. Most of those set forms we read of, in

Scripture, seem to make for this truth, they being publick; our Saviours indeed was private, and used only for that time; whether the *Prodigals* was publick or no in the Parable, it is not so easie to be determined. It seems to be of a mixed kind, since the Servants of the House are spoken to by the Father immediately at the close of his Parable. The Church therefore (or if that offend) the Congregation of the *Elders*, is judged a more proper place for set forms than any other. The reasons that induceth to this opinion, are such as these.

1. *Reason.* Set forms are rather to be used in publick than in private; for there men are and must be more close, than they are or ought to be in private. There are many secret sins which the conscience of man in a powerful way accuseth him of, and many and great temptations befalls him, which he must pray against, and yet it is not expedient, that either the one or the other should be known of the whole Assembly. In publick we insist upon generalls, and confesse so, that every man knows himself to be as guilty, as he that makes that confession: But now in private we must unboosome our selves to God, and show him all our heart, take shame to our selves; by enlarging our selves upon the particular aggravations of our beloved sins, and make known our foulest iniquities, with *David*, saying, *Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.* It's this that makes the House of *David* apart, and their Wives apart, *Zach. 12. 12.* to call upon the Lord for the taking away of their particular sins. Now we cannot, neither are we bound to let men know of all these things whereof we must and ought to accuse our selves of before God; and therefore set forms, wherein we usually are in generall, are fitter for the publick than the private exercises of a Christian.

2. *Reas.* Rather are set forms to be used in publick, for men cannot dispence with their infirmities without great discouragements so well in publick, as they can in private. It is better sometimes, and fills the soul full of more true Christian joy to be heard of God alone, than to be heard of God and man together. God knows what they mean by their broken and half expressions, and picks good sence from them out of his goodness, which men would deride and scorne, and smile at through their folly and wickedness. Against these things they have no spirits to stand out, but are

are discouraged; and because of men, they are disheartened from serving God. Now in private this would be removed; and both with cheerfulness and readiness make his request known; knowing that God will hear him for his crying, when men would condemn him for his very praying.

3. *Reas.* Set forms are rather to be used in publick than in private; for generally set forms are so composed, that they pray directly for the good of the whole Church, and indirectly for their own particular good; and private prayer reaches directly for thy self, and indirectly for the Church. When thou art praying as here in the Text, *Receive us graciously*, thou art praying for all directly, and begst favour for thy self, as it were, only at the second hand, as one of that number: But now in private thou art directly for thy self. It satisfies the faith of a believer more when he hath directly prayed for himself, than when he put himself in the croud, and prayed for all; he that hath spoken directly to the King for himself, hath more confidence to obtain his suite, than he that begged for an hundredth, whereof himself was one; the nature of the company may keep back that blessing which was asked for all; speak therefore to the King directly for thy self, and the God of Heaven grant thee thy Petition.

4. *Reas.* Set forms are rather to be used in publick than private; for they are generally composed in their length, as to give sufficient edification to the bulk of the people; the Minister, or the Master of the Family, may close before themselves, or he be weary; but they must have a respect both to the affections and vocations of the people, and according to them, order their Petitions. But now in private it is otherwise, thou mayst take thy leisure, thou mayst with our Saviour Christ, *pray all night*; and if the firing of thy affections be run out, and they stand, by a fresh meditation thou mayst wind them up again, and so move, untill thou come to the very high-noon of Assurance; knowing that the Lord hath heard thy prayer, and given thee the desire of thy dips; which perhaps, by reason of the Congregation, thou canst not do in a set form.

HAVING thus (Christian Reader) run through the nature of, and lawful using of Set Forms of Prayer, and that plainly, and yet truly; we come in the last place to answer those Arguments that are brought against this practice, and particularly those that are urged against the using of those set forms of prayer, which we are now by Law required to use, commonly called The Book of Common-Prayer. When, I say, those Arguments, I mean not every Cavil, which passionate or froward spirits are pleased to make against that Book, but some chief and seemingly rational reasons that seem at first sight to be of power to hinder the using of it, and yet can do it no more than *Delilah's* new ropes could hold *Sampson*, *Judg.* 16. 12. It is objected:

Object. 1. That form or book of Common Prayer is not the same that formerly was established by Law, especially that book that was ratified by Edward the 6th of glorious memory; but is, as it were, another book, not confirmed by Act of Parliament; and therefore as it is now composed, not to be imposed upon the people.

Ans. 1. If there be no Law whereby this book as we now have it, is not ratified, nor est. blished; the greater sign of our obedience do we give to the Civil Magistrate; and the nearer we come to Christ's example (whose Scholars we are) who though there was no Law, that the children should pay tribute, yet least he should give offence, submitted to the Magistrate, *Mat.* 17. 27. *Go thou, and do likewise.*

Ans. 2. If thou beest indited at the Bench for thy contempt; or for thy not reading or using this Book, and no sentence be given out against thee, and he punished for his impudence that durst so openly accuse thee, then, and not before, I will imagine there is no Law: Knowing that at that time there are Statutes which are Statute Laws, and Proclamations which are mutable, made on the behalf of that book, and may then be produced against thee, and to thy cost thou shalt know there is a Law: Whatever thy judgement be, I had rather in quietness believe there is a Law, and so use it, than by trouble feel there is a Law, and be made to use it.

Obj. 2. *Set forms of prayer are of themselves very instrumental for the stirring of the spirit, which ought not to be done; and dangerous in the least degree, if done,* 2 Thel. 3. 19.

Ans. 1. It is denied; was Christs Spirit stinted the third time, because he had used the same words twice before? Was the Spirit of God stinted in the Levites, when they were commanded to use the words of David? Cannot Davids Psalmes be sung with grace in our hearts, nor holy Hymns with divine affections? why then are we commanded so to do? Col. 3. 16. *We may sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord, and be so far from quenching, that we shall be filled with the Spirit,* Eph. 5. 18, 19.

Ans. 2. It is affirmed, They do stint the Spirit, but what Spirit? not of God, but the spirit of man; some whereof ought to be stinted. There are in this Age, whose mouths must be held in with Bit and Bridle: There are Seditious prayers, as well as Seditious Sermons, which must be looked to: There are suspicious prayers, such as men in charity cannot say *Amen* to; and yet such as in Justice they cannot but say, *So be it.* The Common Prayer possibly stints that spirit; and let it. I need say no more in a point wherein I may so easily be understood; whatever they pray, yet let God say, *I have found David my servant, with my holy oyle have I anointed him, with whom my hand shall be established, mine arme also shall strengthen him, the enemy shall not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him: And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him: But my faithfulness, and my mercy shall be with him, and in my Name shall his horne be exalted; I will set his hand in the Sea, and his right hand in the Rivers; He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation: Also I will make him my first-borne; higher than the Kings of the Earth, my mercy will I keep for him for evermore; and my Covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven,* Psal. 89. 20. Let him that heareth, and let him that readeth say, *Amen.*

Ans. 3. This would take the practice of publick praying from the Church; for the prayer of the Minister, seems, and doth,

doth; according to this Argument, that the spirit in the people that heares: Inasmuch as they are not left to their liberty, but limited to his expressions, which is equally a stinting of the spirit in the people, as the Common Prayer is a stinting of the spirit in him; and by consequence, would take away the ever received Custom of praying publicly, for the Churches of God.

Ans. 4. We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and for a while pray for them, and with them; have patience, it's but a very little while; for when you are in the Pulpit, you have liberty; only remember that of Solomon, *Who so walketh uprightly shall be saved; but he that is perverse in his ways, shall fall at once*, Prov. 28. 18.

Object. 3. Your Common Prayer begets a tediousness or creates a weariness upon the people, through the great number of the Prayers that are to be read; and such exercises are to be made delightful, and not tiresome, or tedious.

Ans. 1. Though there be many prayers in that Book, yet they are but short prayers: And how much difference is there between hearing twenty prayers in one hour (if so many were read) and hearing one prayer an hour long? the one sure is as apt to breed weariness, as the other.

Ans. 2. As for the number of the prayers that are in that Book, it is to be surmised, that they are so far from tyreing, that they refresh the spirits of men; short prayers seeming to say as the Levites Father-in-law, *Comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way*, Judg. 19. 5.

Ans. 3. A great measure of that weariness may be wholly prevented by the Ministers discretion. To say no more, remember that Gospel-precept, *Be not weary in well-doing*; and if thou be, yet I counsel thee never to complain, provoke rather to love, and to good works.

Object. 4. Set forms of prayer, especially as they are said in the Common Prayer, seem to breed a very great confusion in the Congregation, so many speaking at once from one end of the Church to the other, the one, as it were, hindering the others devotion.

Ans. 1. For all to speak at one time (if all did speak) breeds no confusion; for they speak all one and the self-same thing:

thing: Were there a diversity of words or gestures, there might be a disorder; but here all concurs to the speaking of that, that all know will be spoken of.

Ans. 2. This Objection takes away the high and holy Ordinance of Singing, from all the Christian Congregations of the World; for there all speak out aloud; and in no Ordinance doth the Church on Earth, come nearer to the Church in Heaven, than in this; and yet there is no confusion; but *all things are done in decency, and in order.* But this is nothing; the singing of Psalms having been as great offence to some of them that make this Objection, as the Common Prayer itself ever gave.

Object. 5. *There seems to be many vaine, idle, and it is to be feared, sinful repetitions in your Common Prayer, as, Lord have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us, and Glory be to the Father, &c. which gives cause to suspect the lawfulness of its use.*

Ans. 1. How often would you have it done? and at what number would you stand? according as the Lords Prayer, which is often used in our set Forms of Prayer, was by you thrust out of your Houses, and as farre as you were able, out of our Churches; so in all probability would you use *Glory be to the Father: But, Lord have mercy upon us: Christ have mercy upon us; we have left undone those things, that we ought to have done.*

Ans. 2. The oftner they be said, they are the liker to be heard: Our Saviours asking thrice for one thing, did show the vehemency of his mind to receive the mercie he was then asking: *To him that knocks, shall be opened;* and the oftner we knock, we shew the earnestness of our desire. That Widow in the Parable, *Luke 18. 3.* came with a blunt request, *Avrange me of mine Adversary;* a Petition, without much Rhetorick to set it forth, yet her continual crying made the unjust Judge at last to Answer her suit. And shall not God Answer his own elect that call day and night unto him?

Ans. 3. If this be granted, we shall lose out of the book of God one whole and entire Psalm, (*viz.*) *Psalm 136.* for in 26 verses, 26 times, *For his mercy endureth for ever;* is repeated. It was well that those men were not by when the *Psalmist*

composed that *Psalm*; doubtless they would have been earnest to have stirred the spirit, and have informed him where he had done amiss. *Paul* was something out of the way; for in writing of the first ten verses of *1 Cor.* 1. he hath the Name of *Jesus* nine times repeated; but we have not so learned Christ; for if with the heart men cry often, though with the same words, they are like to speed as well as he that alters his expressions, as he changeth other.

Object. 6. *There are several Oaths, and that grievous ones too, that you speak, as it were, blasphemously; uttering in your prayers, that that breaks Commandments, especially in your Letany, where you swear, By thy Agony and bloody sweat, By thy Cross and Passion, By thy precious Death and Burial, &c.*

Ans. 1. It is to be wondered, how the Apostle *Paul* hath the confidence to say, *Heb.* 10. 39. *that he is not of the number of them that draw back into perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul;* since in the very next Chapters he according to this, goes smoothly on in swearing a great many times together: For thus he sayes, *By Faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God: By Faith Abel offered up a more excellent sacrifice than Cain: By Faith Enoch was translated;* and so fifteen times over. Reader, if this Objection were prosecuted, 'tis to take either that prayer away, or cancel this Chapter out of the Canon, we might say with *Solomon*, *that one sinner destroys much good.*

Ans. 2. Reader, when thou desirest to be delivered from the power and rage of sin by Christs Passion, and to have thy heart cleansed by the coming of the Holy Ghost, as *St. Paul* had his, *Tir.* 3. 5. a Christian hearing thee, will charitably suppose that thou art praying; however, he will never suppose that thou art swearing.

Ans. 3. It were worth our enquiring, to know, if these men do desire, or pray to be delivered from Christs death, since they are angry with us, for desiring to be saved by it; and if they do so, then to know, unto whom they make that prayer? and I shall beseech God, *that it may please him to forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers, and to turn their hearts.* Deal not with them, *O Lord,* after their sins, neither reward them after their iniquities.

Obj. 7.

Obj. 7. Besides your Oaths that are in your Letany, there is a Prayer that our hearts cannot say Amen to, for it is, or seems at least, to be very sinful: The Prayer is this;

That it may please thee to preserve all that travel by Land or water, (here we pray for Thieves, Robbers, and Pirates, which ought not to be done;) All Women labouring of Childe, (here we pray for all Whores and Strumpets;) All sick persons, and young children; and to show thy pity upon all prisoners and captives, (here we pray for all the damned souls, they being in prison; and for the devils, they being captives.)

Ans. 1. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? Jerem. 17. 9. Tu Domine bonus, ego malus, tu Pius, ego Impius; tu sanctus, ego miser; tu iustus, ego iniquus; tu Deus, ego creatus; tu vita, ego mortuus. Blessed is the man that watcheth always: From all blindness of heart, from pride, vain glory, and hypocrisie, from envy, hatred, and malice, and from all uncharitableness, good Lord deliver us.

Ans. 2. As we are to have no communication, nor communion with Devils, so neither are we to make supplication for them: But we are bound to remember them that are in bonds; as in bond with them, and them that suffer adversity, as if we our selves also were in the body, Heb. 13. 3. The Whore her self when she is in labour, ought to be prayed for, (though if you had not more of the Serpent than of the Dove, you would not see her at all in this prayer:) So is a Thief also, though he were going to be hanged for stealing; or a Murderer for Murdering, and if the Lord will bless all that travel by Land and Water with his grace, there will be no Robbers. It is the desire of the Church, That all Israel both temporally and eternally be saved. Why dost thou condemn her for her charity? Quasi unusquisque intus est, taliter iudicatur exterius, Kemp. True Christian charity thinketh no evil, 1 Cor. 13. 5.

Object. 8. There are according to those directions given you concerning the reading of Lessons, several Chapters to be read out of the Apocrypha, in the Congregation, where nothing should be read but Scripture.

Ans. 3.

Ans. 1. Should nothing be read in Churches but Scripture, where then should we read Briefs, Proclamations, and Patents for Collections, which are appointed to be read in publick; and upon the Sabbath-day too, than which nothing doth more usually occur, and nothing less poke against it. And yet, if men did not delight in Controversies, they might perceive, that the Reading of those Chapters is left to the Ministers discretion.

Ans. 2. Saint Paul commanding the *Colossians*, Col. 4. 16. to let his Epistle be read to the Church of *Laodicea*, commands them withal, that they read in their Church, the Epistle from *Laodicea*; which Epistle not being Canonical, yet appointed by that unerring Apostle to be read in the Church, proves the weakness of the Objection against *Apocrypha* for not being Scripture.

Ans. 3. There is a *Calendar* prefixed before the Book of *Common Prayer*; and amongst the *Lessons* appointed for every day of the month, there are some 30 Chapters out of the books of *Wisdom*, *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Baruch*, and *Ecclesiasticks*, to be read. In the books of the *Apocrypha* there are many falsities, much non-sence; things that agree not with Scripture, and many things that agree not with it self. Whether the Chapters that are appointed to be read, contain in them any of these, I have neither purpose nor leisure to search; yet since most of them are out of the books of *Wisdom* and *Ecclesiasticks*, we shall suppose the best; but suppose the worst, there is none to be feared, or at least no great fear that their reading will do much hurt; except the people will repine whether their Minister will or no; twice every day to their Church or Chappel to hear service; that which I see no great reason for Ministers to be very much afraid of. For, if the people do not so come, they are not obliged to heed that *Calendar*.

Ans. 4. There is a *Calendar* prefixed before the Book of *Common Prayer*, wherein the *Lessons* that are appointed to be read every Sabbath-day throughout the year, are set down; and in that there is only the first Chapter of the Book of *Wisdom* to be read; wherein there is nothing but what savours of good; so that according to the *Common Prayer*, throughout the whole year, there is but one Sunday that hath *Apocrypha* ordained for it.

it, and that is *Whitsunday*; unless the *Sabbath* fall upon a Feast, and that may bring or make a small alteration. Many fear, that the reading or hearing of *Apocrypha* in their Churches, may do much hurt. The first Chapter of *Wisdom*, which is all, cannot do hurt: There is about this a great noyse, and but small cause.

Ans. 5. There are two things that usually Ministers do in Churches: 1. To observe Doctrines; and 2. To exhort to Manners; for observing and confirming of Doctrines, the Scriptures are only to be used, *Article 6.* of the Church of *England*. For exhorting to manners, Poets, Heathens, Philosophers, are frequently cited; there being in such Writers excellent documents, and examples perswading to goodness, and to a good life, and for this the *Apocrypha* is appointed to be read, (*viz.*) for exhortation to manners, not confirmation of Doctrines, *Art. 6.* of the Church of *England*. And indeed to me it is equally a sin, to cite or speak sentences out of *Seneca* the Heathen, in a Pulpit upon a Lords day, or any other moral Author, which is frequently done, as it is to speak or read sixteen sentences of *Philo* the Jew, or whoever was the Author of that book of *Wisdom* or *Ecclesiasticus*; albeit, it were oftner done.

Ans. 6. When you say that *Apocrypha* is not to be read, I suppose you mean, because it is humane inventions, not the Word of God. It is to be known, that no more are Ministers Sermons; there are in Sermons mens wit or invention exercised in framing Arguments; in drawing Corollaries, applying those Arguments, none of which in a proper sence are Scripture; but so farre as they agree with, and can be proved to be true by Scripture, so farre we embrace them, believe them, practice them, yet still never behold them as the Word of God: so every Printed Sermon should be a Bible, but as mens Exhortations siting to the Word: Look upon several Exhortations of the *Apocrypha* as no other, particularly the first Chapter of *Wisdom*; the only Chapter appointed to be read; and thou mayst be satisfied.

Object. 9. The Common Prayer is but in it self a heap of prayers collected out, gathered, and translated out of the *Mass*-Book of the Church of *Rome*, and therefore to be avoided as sinful.

Ans.

Ans. 1. Take heed and beware that thou beeft none of those *bruit beasts* Peter speaks of, 2 Pet. 2. 12. *speaking evil of those things they understand not.*

Ans. 2. There are in thy *English Bible* several things, many things that are in the *Mass-book*, yet keep thy Bible, and throw it not away; neither tear the leaves out, as a Woman once tore a leaf out of her Bible as Popish, for having the word *Bishop* written in it, it being never awhit the worse; the Sun may shine upon a Dung-hill, and yet be clean; the whole Bible may be put in ballads, and yet the Word of God not the worse.

Ans. 3. It is not to be denied, neither need any be ashamed to confess, That there is much in the *Common Prayer* (not to say all) to be found in the *Mass*. The *Papists* in their *Mis-sal*, having with other Superstitious, and often-times blasphemous expressions, wound in many holy Hymns, and Scriptural Songs, as *Mahomet* did some things that either were in or agreeable to Scripture, in his *Alchoran*; which our Pious Composers of this Book, (the greatest Oppolers of, and burned for not compliance with Popery) like wise *Chymicks*, took away; and what was good, holy, and either agreeable to, or literally in the Scripture, put together in this Book, which by Supream Authority (not as from the *Mass*, but) as from the infallible Word of God, was thought profitable to the edification of the Church established and appointed in our publick Assemblies to be used and read. And he that reads the whole Book of the *Mass*, may know that there is as great difference between the *Mass* (as it is used in *Rome*) and the *Common Prayer*, as used in *England*; as there is between *Jeroboams two Calves*, 1 Kings 12. 28. and *Solomons twelve Oxen*, 1 Kings 7. 24. the one being absolutely forbidden, as against the Law; the other, though never commanded in, yet never disapproved by the Word of God; his presence filling the place wherein they were; his judgements falling upon the other where they stood. They differ, as *Nebuchadnezzars musick* unto his Idol, and as *Dauids musick* in Gods worship; the one the three Children would not regard; the other no holy Saint did ever oppose; the one was to an Idol, which was against the Law; the other unto God, not contrary to the Law; the King out of ambition invented the one; the other out of Devotion, brought in the other. The one was *Nebuchadnezzars*'s

mind against God; the other *Dauids* mind for God; the effect shewed that God hated the one, and that God was well-pleased with the other: For though it was not mentioned in the Law, but a pure invention of *Dauids*, yet no Prophet before nor after the Captivity before Christ, nor Apostle after him, did ever in the least give a check to it; or blame any *Israelite* for observing of it: In a word, there is a great difference between the *Mass* and the *Common Prayer* (as it is used in our Churches) (let him that readerh understand) as there is between a *Papist* and a *Catholick*: This being conformable to the Universal practice of the Universal Church in all Ages, the other to the late practice of the particular Church of *Rome* in these last years; *Wo be to such as call evil good, and good evil!* *Isa.* 5. 20.

Obj. 10. *The Common-Prayer-book*, to those that are strong, may appear to be lawful; but we being weak in the faith, and having tender consciences, cannot submit to it; and it was formerly took away, by them whose consciences could not close up with it.

Ans. 1. What tender consciences some of those men had that took away the *Common Prayer*, and they that lately persecuted the users of it, is known to the World that now is, and shall be known to all generations that are to come; how tender of mens lives, of the Christian profession, of sinning against God, the world is not so dull as not to apprehend.

Ans. 2. Because there is such discourses about tender consciences, let it not trouble the Reader, if we enlarge upon that Theme: And let us distinctly handle

1. The nature of conscience in general.
2. The nature of this tender conscience in particular.
3. The duty of him who hath such a conscience.

To let pass several distinctions and definitions of Schoolmen which are something obscure, dark, and intricate;

1. The nature of conscience may be known by this description: It is a faculty in the soul of man, taking knowledge of, and noting all his actions whether good or evil; and accordingly approving or condemning. It's the souls Register, as it remembers things; it's the souls Accuser, as it reproves things; it's the
souls

souls Judge, as it sentences the soul for things. It may for a time, sleep, or be still, and so not act, as either of these; yet at last it will awake, and bite like a Serpent, and sting like an Adder, witness Judas: According to the light that this faculty receives of the nature of things, is distinguished into a natural conscience, and a suprrnatural; the natural is that faculty that is only enlightened by natural reason, and from rational principles, holds this good, and this evil; is glad for doing this, and sorry for doing that. This the pure Heathen hath, *Rom. 2. 15.* The supernatural, is, when the conscience or souls receives not only light from Reason, but from Scripture, and by that knows what is good, or what is evil; those that know not God, know not what the Sabbath is; they that know the Scripture, do, and their conscience will judge them if they do not performe what in that particular it requireth; so doth not the conscience of the other.

2. The nature of a tender conscience; it's a faculty in the faithful and religious soul, perswading him to abstain from that, the lawfulness of which he doth not fully apprehend, upon the account of offending God. Because we are speaking to Christians, we suppose faith in him that is thus tender; and in regard the conscience acts according to the apprehension it hath of things, whether by Natural or Scriptural helps, we define our conscience, as perswading the soul to abstain, and hindering the soul (not mentioning those things that the conscience binds the soul to, that being beside our purpose) from acting that, that by its light it judges to be sinful; and so conducing to the taking away of that peace that for the present it enjoys with God.

There are four things, some whereof go before, or follow after this conscience; for the which it is the duty, and hath been the practice of all Saints, to rid themselves of this kind of conscience, (I am not speaking of it as touching sin, of which all are to be very tender, but of this doubting conscience, that they may be resolved what to do.)

1. Ignorance, *1 Cor. 8. 7.* In which place the ignorance of the party, is the cause of his sinning: And *Rom. 14. 14.* the Apostles knowledge satisfies him of the truth of that whereof he that is ignorant, yet remaineth doubtful; for according to the greatness or smallness of the light that is in the soul, so much the less, or so much the more he questions concerning the lawfulness

of that, of which he is then disputing of. The *Apostle* through the greatness of his knowledge, is perswaded, that of it self nothing is unclean. Another is more ignorant; and eating in the time of doubting, hath his conscience defiled; There follows it

2. *Unquietness*: He that hath this tender conscience (who are called *the weak in the faith*, Rom. 14. 1.) leads an unquiet, restless, and troublesome life, vexing themselves, as it were, about questions; he is often troubled, perplexed, and grieved, in beholding others, especially doing that (though lawful enough) which in his mind (not sufficiently enlightned) be approved not, Rom. 14. 15. his Christian course would be more joyful to him, were it otherwise. There follows it

3. *Censoriousness*: He falls often into the act of a Judge; condemning him for that doing, whereof yet he himself doth but only doubt; he hath not yet resolved that it is unlawful, yet he supposes that none should act untill he determine the case; he is judging him that eateth any thing, for he himself holds nothing lawful but herbs; and he to whom every thing is lawful, holds, that he sins that eateth herbs, Rom. 14. 3. It is not well for any to judge my liberty; yet some that have this conscience, will do it, 1 Cor. 10. 29. There follows it

4. *Sinful confidence*; this frequently is a companion of it. Seeing a knowing Christian, acting upon knowing principles, he not yet in himself satisfied, presumes upon the others knowledge, and so brings guilt upon himself, 1 Cor. 8. 10. I have instanced all along in things of indifferency, of which sort I take the *Common Prayer* to be: for as in Scripture we have no particular Law against several things now done, so neither is there in Scripture any warrant for their doing; they being left to mens own arbitrement, and the Magistrates Authority.

Thirdly, Let us see his duty that is weak in the faith, or hath this tender conscience; for in the Objection, as well as in Scripture, they signifie one and the same thing: It is his duty

1. Diligently to enquire after, and earnestly study to obtain a certain knowledge, and true apprehension of the nature of things. It was their ignorance of the nature of things sacrificed to Idols, that made them question the lawfulness of their eating, and so caused them to sin, 1 Cor. 8. 7. Knowledge lights a Candle,

dle, as it were, in the soul, and clearly shows him what things are. It shows him what is necessary; and that first for it self, or for another thing; what is indifferent, and what is expedient; what is lawful, what is useful; and by knowing the differences of these, he may live more contentedly in himself, and more joyfully among the Members of the Church.

2. It's his duty, to cleave to that side; and performe that act, that from Scripture and Reason he hath a more clear discovery of, in the choice and election of things; if a *Dilemma* be made by his own soul, whether it be lawful to do this, suppose the using or reading of the *Common Prayer*, now see where Scripture is more clear, and the light of it is most manifest, and according to that act, as in the case in hand; seeing the Scripture enjoynes men to be *subject* to Princes and Governors, *not only for wrath, but for conscience sake*, Rom. 13. 5. (so that it is no indifferent thing to obey Magistrates, but a tie that God hath laid upon us, under the pain of his *displeasure*) and that we are to *submit to every Ordinance of man; and he that resisteth them, resisteth an Ordinance of God*, Rom. 13. 2. We cannot rebell against Authority, and have good consciences. Now if this Magistrate enjoining this set form of prayer, trouble thee, before thou oughtst to disobey, thou oughtst to get clear truth to defend thy self in thy opposition, or then thou sinn'st highly. For thou opposest the clear, known, manifest, and open Will of God, upon a pretence that thou fearest to break another Law of God, which thou canst not at all produce. We clearly see, and thy conscience seeth open and plain Laws broke, and thou canst not show one Law of God that is broken by the observing of those Laws made by the Magistrate; but several plain Laws of God are broken by thy not obeying. This is to do a real evil; even sin against God, and thy conscience, lest thou do that, which only in thy apprehension thou thinkst may be evil, and yet canst not show how. Practice therefore that, that in the Scripture is clear; for let no manifest Law be slighted for to keep a Law from being contemned that thou knowst not, neither canst thou show. In being commanded this, thou art enjoined to nothing that in the least contradicts the Word of God, or that the Word of God is against; and before thou canst clear thy self of rebellion, which is as the sin of witchcraft; and stubbornness, which is as iniquity and idolatry, 1 Sam.

15. 23. thou must produce those Texts that speak against this service, or then those Texts will condemn thee, that command thee to obey our Lord the King. It is not enough to say they are not commanded, (for so is no Minister to read a Chapter before he preach,) but to show where it is forbidden. Thus much Reader, may suffice: We shall proceed further to answer the Objection.

Ans. 3. Many of those tender consciences have a prejudice against the truth, and will not learn, but be troubled at that Doctrine that teacheth them to know the nature of things; and to defend, or speak of the *Common Prayer*, is to them an eye-sore; where, were they as tender of conscience, as they would pretend to be, seeing lawful Authority commands, they would endeavor by all means to learn to come to the understanding of it, rather than spend their breath in grumbling against it.

Ans. 4. We see most of those men live and walk as other men; and when their practice is seen in the world, they may be even listed among Publicans and Sinners. The Pharisees made a conscience of putting the money into the Treasury, it being the price of blood, but the guilt of blood upon their hearts, they could endure. Seeing in all other points they walk as other men (to say no more) and the thing not contrary to any Law that ever God made, and enjoined by lawful Authority, and they not desiring to be informed of the lawfulness of its use: It is to be feared, that not their tender consciences, but their stout stomachs are the cause of their disobedience.

Ans. 5. As for those whose consciences are really tender, and are indeed afraid of sin, and not satisfied as to the lawfulness of its use, and really appearing to be such, and desiring to be informed or taught concerning it; untill that time it is hoped and desired that the Civil Magistrate will take care for them; and untill their consciences be better informed, will take them, as Nursing Fathers their weak children, into their protection. In the mean time let them not judge them that use it according to the Law, and to their consciences.

Object. 11. The places of Scripture that are used in the *Common Prayer-book*, are not to be found in our Bibles at all, and indeed are not Scripture, and very dangerous, particularly the very first words, which are these: At a certain time there

a sinner doth repent him of his sin from the bottom of his heart, I will put all his wickedness out of my remembrance, saith the Lord; which words are not only dangerous; as holding forth men may repent when they will, but false; there being no such words in Ezek. 18. 21, 22. from which it is pretended these words are taken.

Ans. 1. It's usual both in Sermons and in Books, for men to deliver certain truths, and name or point the Scripture in the Margin, which if we strictly examine, we shall not find the self-same words in Scripture, but yet such as hold out the truth of that which is brought as a proof for them. It is not necessary alwayes to name the very words, but direct the Reader and the Hearer to that Scripture that holds it out. So Saint Paul, *Ephes. 4. 8.* having occasion to cite *Psal. 68. 18.* doth not tie himself to the words of the Text, as is clearly to be seen.

Ans. 2. The words are most true; for *whensoever a sinner from the bottom of his heart, repents him of his sin, he shall be forgiven;* and *Ezek. 18.* holds it out; else, what needed the Doctrine of Repentance be preached to men? and there is no more danger that these words will induce a man to continue in sin, because of the word *At what time soever;* than there is danger in the words of the Prophet, who sayes, *If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed;* which is of substance the same with the other, and indeed equally dangerous. The like may be said of divers other places cited in the Common Prayer.

Obj. 12. It may for itself be used, but it may prove a trap-door to let in other things that are of a greater concernment; it's best to prevent evil at first.

Ans. 1. It is a blessed thing indeed for a Christian to fear the least evil; and in matters of concernment (if at any time) to walk circumspectly; to foresee an evil, and prevent it; yet let us do no evil, that good may come of it. Disobey not the Civil Magistrate in an open way; (for rebellion is as witchcraft, 1 Sam. 15. 23.) for fear that some evil, which is but only supposed, may follow after; lest in some sort we justify the Jews in murdering Christ; for this was one Argument, *lest the Romans should come and take away their place and Nation;* John 11. 48. to prevent which, they would, contrary to all Law, put an

and innocent man to death; *Let's do no evil, that good may come of it.*

Answ. 2. Whatever follow it that is not against Scripture nor contradicted by Gods Law; the Law of God enjoyns a man to obey; to what purpose else were there Magistrates? and why should I be commanded to obey them, and to submit unto them? *Let all things be done in decency and order*, is a Text that in a great measure is left to the Civil Magistrate to expound, *1 Cor. 14. 40.* It is not only to say, This is not in Scripture (as was said before) that makes a thing unlawful; but, This is contrary to Scripture, spoke against in Scripture; either in direct Text, or sound reason from that Text. To instance, you say, That it is unlawful to marry with a Ring, because it is not in Scripture: I can answer with as true a consequence, It is unlawful to marry with a Minister, for it's not in Scripture commanded; there being neither in Law nor Gospel, any direction, for Priest or Apostle, Pastor or Evangelist, for that case of Marriage. So that the marrying with or by a Minister, ought as really to trouble or molest the conscience, as to marry with a Ring: Nay, in some sort more; for marriage was in all Ages; God had Ministers in all Ages; marriage was held a holy thing in all Ages; yet God gave no directions concerning his immediate servants; nor precepts to them, to be assistant at that Solemnity of Marriage. *Abrahams* servant gave to *Rebecca*, when she (by signs desired by himself) was to be betrothed to his Masters Son, *ear-rings of Gold*, denoting the purity and perpetuity of that love that should be betwixt them, which is signified by the Gold, and the roundness of the Ring: The like may be said of joyning of hands. As for standing at the Creed, by which 1. We declare that it is our faith. 2. We hold forth, that we acknowledge it to be no prayer, (a fond conceit of some) Whosoever will not obey the Civil Magistrate in this, we may suppose it is because it is not his Creed; and indeed some that would be thought holy, stumble at the Holy Catholick Church. Touching confirmation by a Bishop, which is his praying for the baptized, by or with laying on of hands; since the prayer of a righteous man may avail much for the sick, it may as well for the sound, *James 5. 19.* they may obtain the encrease of divine grace, the thing prayed for; and seeing *Philip*, though he preached and baptized, yet might not confirm
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by the *laying on of hands*, *Acts* 8. 17. that being reserved for the Apostles, it is therefore now left to the Bishop. The same might be said of *white garments* (if they should be enjoyed) there being no Law for wearing black. The Priests under the Law wore *white*; Christ in the Vision wore *white*, *Dan.* 10. 5. The Angels at the Resurrection wore *white*, *John* 20. 12. The Elders in the *Revelation*, are in *white*, *Revel.* 4. 4. And finding no Law for black, we may conclude that *white* is no unlawful Garment: If any say it is, show the Law; otherwise I may be of another judgement, since *sin is a transgression of the Law*, *1 John* 3. 4. If it be said that Papists wear it, it can as easily be replied, they wear black. To conclude, the Cross in baptism is a sign at that Sacrament, yet not Sacramental, but Historical; not of our Covenant with God, but of our profession towards men; all that belongs to that Ceremony, being spoken unto the Witnesses, as is clear from the words in the Liturgy.

Ans. 3. It is to be hoped and desired that the Governors of our Church by their meekness and careful respect to tender consciences really such, will in establishing Laws, make their moderation to be known to all men.

As touching the use of God-fathers, or witnesses at Baptisme, something may be said for them, if the *Common Prayer* should bring them in. Not to insist upon those two faithful witnesses chosen by the Prophet at the naming of his son, *Maher-shalal-hash-baz*, *Isa.* 8. 2. from which practice some have concluded the Antiquity of witnesses; he seeming to practice that as done by others in the like case, in regard he gets no Commission from the Lord so to do, *when by Anticipation*, *Maher-shalal-hash-baz* was named. Neither shall we speak of the Primitive persecutions, which caused the first Christians to baptize their Infants by Witnesses, undertaking or promising for the Child, upon the supposition of its Parents death or banishment by the Heathenish Tyrants. Witnesses may be kept up.

1. For the upholding of Charity, Peace, and Concord among Christians; it may be a means to keep three or four Families in unity.

2. To make every one careful for the good of each other; for besides the care that God and nature lays upon the Parent, the witness hath upon him a necessity of doing good according to his

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power, and by passing a promise for him (as Guardians for their Wards) become a father in God.

3. We know not what perfection or affliction may befall the Parent, and in that regard Witnesses may be of good use as in the Primitive times. If it be objected, That the promise is made, but never cared for; and made often, but impossible to be kept (if that should be enjoined that is in the *Common Prayer*; for who can promise that the Child *shall forsake the devil and all his works?* &c.) It may be replied

1. That if they make it, and make no conscience of it, they are worthy to be blamed; yet some may be the more remiss in regard of the Parents care; and it is often known, that many times the Child is better for its Witnesses, both outwardly and inwardly; blame them that fail; but blame not the thing, since to many it is a cause of much good, and might be to all.

2. There is in this promise a limitation tacitely implied, as well as in all other promises of this nature; the limitation is *quoad possum* (i. e.) as far as I am able; which must and is necessarily to be understood: If it be present with us, admonition; if it be poor, and we able in some sort, education; if absent from us, hearty supplication may be made for it, and given by us upon the account of that relation that it is to us.

3. I have heard, and am prone to believe, that the duty is incumbent on the God-father no longer than the Child comes to the years of discretion; or at furthest, no longer than the party is unmarried: If it be a woman, her husband is then to dwell with her according to knowledge, and she forsakes Father and Mother: If a man, being educated and brought up in the Christian faith, he himself is bound to keep in it, and the Surety or Witness hath performed his condition. Yea, the natural Father hath a clear conscience if he doth this, whatever falls out after; so that there is not so great cause to fear the coming again of this practice, as some would make and suppose: And whereas it is said, that the Minister may make and cause the Witness to lye at Baptism, when he makes him to affirm, that for himself he *forsakes the devil and his works*, when the contrary by the Witnesses life appears: We say that there is a twofold forsaking of Satan; first by outward profession, and by holy conversation; if the latter be not performed, blame him; there shall be none received as a Witness, that

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denyes not the former; and in that sence it is no lye, but a truth; themselves that make this Objection, being Witnesses.

As for that Ancient Ordinance of the Church, called Confirmation, or Imposition of hands by a Bishop upon the heads of such young Children as are trained up in the rudiments of the most Holy Faith, how shall it be spoke against! For as in the first times of the Gospel, Christians received the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, which miraculous gift ceasing, Christians came to the Bishops as their Successors, by whom (after they had given testimony of their faith and knowledge) they had prayers made unto God for them, (with the laying on of their hands) that he would more and more bleſs them, and confirm them in that faith, whereof before him (as his servant) they had made profession; and that they might stand out against all opposition they meet withal in this life and in the end of their dayes; they might obtain the end of their faith, *the salvation of their soul.* Let me never feare that the *Common Prayer* will bring in this in the least; since *the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,* Jam. 5. 16.

The practice or injunction again of Holy-dayes, feares some, surely to set apart dayes for the Members of Gods Holy Church, to meet and hear Gods holy Word, and receive (if so ordered) his most holy Sacraments, cannot be spoken against by any that knows what it is to feare God: That of the Apostle, *Ye observe dayes, and months, and times, and years,* Gal. 4. 10. makes nothing against the observing of the Feast of *Simon and Jude*, nor the 5th of *November*, since we lay no necessity of Salvation upon either. We may be brought to keep those dayes in Commemoration of the Saints names, that we may be taught the imitation of their virtues. Three things we owe the Saints departed. 1. A keeping a memorial of them in a godly manner. 2. A giving thanks to God for them, and the benefits we received by them. 3. An imitation of their graces, meekness, patience, perseverance, &c. with which they came to the glorious inheritance; and therefore we keep their dayes, as the Epistles and Gospels, appointed to be read in their days, do plainly shew. Not to speak of that Relaxation and Liberty which to Servants is Granted by Law, when perhaps their Churlish Masters would Deny them Liberty without Reason. And if any think, that the observing of such

dayes, as the fifth of *November*, be a superstitious observing of times, they must blame good *Moadcai*, for instituting of *Purim*; and the Generations after him, for observing of them, *Ester* 9. 26, 27.

As for the bowing at the Name of *Jesus* (if Authority command us so to do) what offence can there, or ought there to be taken, for our giving external or outward Reverence, even to that Name *Jesus*, since in a peculiar way our Saviour was by that Name known to all the Multitude upon his Cross at *Jerusalem*; and by that Name was above other names scorned and derided by the *Jewes* and *Pontias Pilate*, and the *Souldiers*? If the Civil Magistrate command a man to Reverence with his Body, *Jesus* the Lord, or King of the *Jewes*, blame him not for performing it; if he honour him not in a spiritual way, check him smartly for it: He ought (if Authority enjoin it) to do the one, but not to leave the other undone; yet in those things the Lord direct His Majesties Heart, that His Laws may be such, that sober-minded men under Him, may lead not only a godly, but a peaceable and quiet life.

Object. 13. *Many of those Ceremonies used formerly were Legal, and we are not under the Law, but freed from it; and use their Ceremonies, were to turn to the beggerly Rudiments of the World, and in part take away our Gospel-liberty.*

Ans. 1. The Gospel takes not away a Civil Power from the Magistrate: We know who paid Tribute; the *Elders* cast down their Crowns at the Throne of *Christ*, *Rev.* 4. But we read not that *Christ* took them from them: In a word, the Gospel commands obedience, *Rom.* 13. 1. *Tit.* 3. 1. to them.

Ans. 2. In part this was answered before; the Ceremony of Marriage by a Minister, is neither Legal nor Evangelical; so burying with a Minister, is commanded neither by Law nor Gospel; yet both are done, and taken to be no sin. So kneeling at the Communion, the gesture of the Body being not mentioned in Scripture. It is said of our Saviour, *advinctus, discumbibat, he lay down with the twelve*, *Matth.* 26. 20. Lying being the gesture then used by the *Jewes*, even at Meals, and long before him, *Exek.* 23. 41. & *Amos* 2. 8. For this case they usually washed their Feet, and plucked off their Shooes before they did eat; yet in the Institution they were to stand, *Exod.* 12. which gesture, viz.

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of having a staffe in their hand, and having shoes on their feet, together with the Ceremony of sprinkling the blood upon the door, in regard that in the Repetition of the Law by God, these words are not added, the Hebrew Doctors both Ancient and Modern (as *Godwine* in his *Jewish Antiquities* declares) do, and did teach with one joynt consent, that those Laws did not extend themselves to the Generations following, but only to have concerned that very night wherein they departed out of *Egypt*; altering therefore that gesture commanded in *Exodus*, they lay, or leaned upon Beds (which gesture our Saviour himself did use) in token of their deliverance and rest obtained. A good example for Christs Followers, to receive that Sacrament according to the custom of the Place or Kingdom wherein they are; which is the only Rule in that case that usually is, or can be given. And moreover, the Apostle laying down severall Rules for worthy receiving of the Lords Supper, concludes, *That things of lesser moment, he would set in order at his personal coming*, 1 Cor. 11. 34. Of which kind, gesture is one; now kneeling being the gesture fittest for prayer (since the Scripture enjoyes none) with which our Church gives that Ordinance, and with which we ought to receive it, it is appointed, and we are commanded to receive it kneeling. So Musick; that for which God gave no precept, but purely was an invention of *David*, never spoken against by the Prophets; though there might have been much spoken, in regard it was so much in Divine Service; for which God had in his Law taken great care, but yet no care for that: And we read of no holy *Israelite*, that out of conscience forbore to come to the Temple, for all the Musick; nay, after the Captivity, at the re-building of the Temple, this was put in practice again, and all this while no Scripture for it; nor none laid to sin, for the using of it. The like might be said for many other Ceremonies; which are, or may be used.

Ans. 3. Legal Ceremonies were of two sorts: Some of them represented Christ, or the *Messiah* to come, which are utterly unlawful to be used in a Christian Church; in part they would hold out Christ to come, *Col. 2. 16, 17.* Others were only for comeliness and decency, as the linnen Breeches or *Ephod*; which chiefly signified the innocency and purity that ought to be in him that wore it; and sometimes for distinctions sake, as the high Priest

Priest his Mitre or Bonnet; which kind, viz. of distinguishing men by their Garments, if enjoined by Authority, may lawfully be submitted to by the Subject, though used in the Law.

Object. 14. Notwithstanding it may be lawful for it self, yet since the common people in the generality, make more account of it, than of Sermons, and do as it were adore that, it might be better removed, as Hezekiah removed the Brazen Serpent.

Ans. 1. If the Civil Magistrate will in his prudence take it away, he were unwise that would fight for it; yea, or write for it. It was Hezekiah, not the people that removed it.

Ans. 2. It is not a fit comparison, the Brazen serpent being capacitated to be Idolized; which the Common-prayer exhorting against sin, praying to shun sin, and to have mercy, to take away sin, and all this in Christ, by Christ, and through Christ, cannot be brought in the least to be the object of false worship; it is incapable in its nature to be made an Idol.

Ans. 3. Because the generality of people makes no good use of it, shall the godly and righteous have the lawful and holy use of it took away? Shall the neglect of others, make them to suffer in this case, that makes it as it were helps towards heaven?

Ans. 4. Will the taking of it away, make the generality of the people more religious? when we see it, let us believe it; it is hard to persuade us to it before; and it is easie to deny it for the present.

Object. 15. For all this, we see many godly Divines are not easily brought to the use of it; yea, would wish with all their hearts, that it might not be enjoyed them; its therefore feared to be no good thing, it is opposed by good men.

Ans. 1. We shall not call their goodness into question; but yet we may question the Reason why their goodness should hinder them from reading this; it seemed unreasonable to Felix, to send a prisoner, and not withall to signify the crimes laid against him, Acts 25. 27. So it should seem unreasonable, for any to oppose the hearing or reading of this Book, which is a condemning of it, and not shew a clear and substantial Reason against it.

Ans. 2. Full as many godly, able and learned Divines do it, as do it not; yea, many more, inasmuch as godliness binds a
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man to yield to the Civil Magistrate all obedience; and so soon as the godly man is stubborn, so soon I may call his godliness into question; for that is *iniquity and idolatry*, 1 Sam. 15. 23.

Ans. 3. Were there fewer godly Divines did it, then there does; yet know, if recriminations and calumniation could, or should carry it (to say no more) the Common-prayer hath the better end of the staffe.

Object. 16. *It is to be supposed, and by what hath been formerly done, rationally suspected, That the Common-prayer is cried up by Ministers, because it helps them oftentimes to spend the time away, without the trouble of preaching; and certainly it will make Ministers lazy.*

Ans. 1. You have read who it was (as I suppose) that was formerly, and now is, *the Accuser of the Brethren*, Revel. 12. 10.

Ans. 2. It cannot make them lazy in the Church, it being alike, to read loud out of a Book, and to speak high without a Book; it equally spends the lungs, and wearies the body.

Ans. 3. It is well that you would not have Ministers idle; but yet remember they were *Egyptians*, that called for work, for the full tayle of Brick, and yet would give no Straw, that the work might the more chearfully be done, and the Brick the more easily made up; see *Exod.* 5. 16. Ministers through poverty may be oftner abroad than at home; and necessity may keep them from their Study, when themselves could wish they were at their Book; it may be, Lord, not thy Servants, by thy own people are in the fault. It went ill with *Israel*, and it was bad for the *Levirite* (who otherwise was to have a comfortable subsistence) when he left *Bethlem Judah*, to sojourn where he could find a place; Blame him not altogether that he waited not, nor gave attendance at the Altar, *Judg.* 17. 6. It's sad to see him that should use Hospitality to others, taking Almshouses from others; but this is the case with many, upbraid them not therefore, neither call them idle. God himself will oblige no man to work in his Vineyard without a reasonable allowance: having now a King in *Israel*, and such a One as is touched with our Afflictions, we hope to see the Breaches of *Zion*, as well as the Ruines of the House of *David* repaired; that the foul mouths of foolish men may be stopped, railing against the Ministry for their laziness, or idleness, or looseness;

looseness, when necessity is the usual fore-runner of them all; it was that that made the Levite suffer himself to be consecrated a Priest to a graven or molten Image, but it was when there was no King in Israel, Judg. 17. 6, 7. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.

Ans. 4. It is not good to be surmisers of evil. We hope to see such Rulers and Governors in the Church, as shall see the Ministers of the several Congregations, to give, and that in due season, to their people, what the Lord hath delivered unto them, if they should forget that curse that befalls such who preach not the Gospel.

S E C T. VIII.

HAVING thus gone through the several Heads proposed in the beginning, touching the lawful use of a set form of Prayer: to make some use and improvement of all, Christian Reader, I would have thee

1. Not to stick at a set form of prayer, especially in private: We ought to *grow in grace, and go on to perfection*; though set forms be lawful, yet imagine not they are necessary; those whose weak and infirm parts cannot carry them forth into a fluency and promptness of Language, may use Crutches, and so I take the generality of people at this time to be, and suppose it requisite for them to use such helps; but yet to stick at them is not good; we must not be always children; neither are we to remain babes in knowledge.

2. Wherever thou prayest in a set form, let it not be in a formal way: Let thy heart be upright with God, whilst thy lips speak unto him.

3. Judge them not that pray in a set form. God is the same God still, and his ears are not taken with the variety of the words of a man; but his eyes, and his mind, with the reality of the thoughts of a man.

Obj. 17. In all the Common Prayer throughout, the directions usually given to the Priest, the Priest shall do this, and the Priest shall do that, and there the Priest shall do the other thing, which smells highly of Popery; might not the word Minister be inserted, this being the word now for the preachers of the Gospel, and not Priest, which was

a word used of old for the Sacrificers under the Law, who are abolished, and now used only to express those Superstitious persons that wait at the Altar of the Church of Rome; and therefore to be shunned by us who decline such practices.

Ans. 1. If the word *Angel* had been as often used in the Common Prayer, as the word *Priest*, in all probability it had been equally offensive, though often used in the New Testament, and signifies a Pastor, Teacher, or Bishop, in those places, which the word *Minister* always doth not do. The word *Minister* is in the Original, the same with *Deacon*, and holds out both male and female; a waiter at a Table, or serving man, as *καὶ οἱ οὐνοὶ αὐτῶν τοῖς διακόναις*, which the Vulgar Latine reads, *Dicit Mater ejus Ministris*, His Mother said to the Ministers or Servants, John 2. 5. so *Phæbe* is called a *Diaconess* or Minister (to speak after that manner) Rom. 16. 1. so in several other places, 1 Tim. 4. 6. Ephes. 6. 21. Now the Office of a Deacon is to minister about almes deeds, or works of charity or mercy, a work which is somewhat lower, than to intercede directly for the people to God, which is the direct Office of the Priest or Elder; for so Priest signifies, coming from the word: *πρεσβύτερος*, translated *Elder*, 1 Tim. 5. 1.

Ans. 2. Though the Papists use the word *Priest* to signifie their Teachers, it can no more induce us to be ashamed of that name, than the Priests of *Baal*, or *Jupiter*, or of *Venus*, could make the sons of *Aaron* to disown that Title of Dignity.

Ans. 3. We shall find the Scripture use the name *Minister* to the Legal Priests; and the Ministerial duties receive the names of the legal Sacrifices by the Apostles of the Gospel, which may hold out the lawfulness of this expression, as in Joel 2. 17. the Priests are called Ministers; *Let the Priests the Ministers of the Lord*, *stand between the Porch and Altar*; and so Ezek. 46. the same persons that are called *Priests* in the 20 verse, are called *Ministers* in the 24 verse; from both which I infer, that the Lords Priests are Ministers; and the Ministers of the Lord are Priests; (taking Minister in the sence that the Objection would have it.) And again, the Ministers under and of the Gospel, are said to give sacrifices, *when they offer up the calves of their lips*, as in the Text; and *almes-deeds* are called *Sacrifices*, Heb. 13. 15. Now he that offers up those Gospel Sacrifices for the people unto God, may, without offence, be called a Gospel Priest; which distinction alone solves the Objection. It is to be acknowledged, that in a proper sence

it cannot be applyed to Gospel-Teachers, they offering but improper or Metaphorical Sacrifices, and therefore allusively only are they called *Priests*, (yet no unlawfully) as Christ is called the *High Priest*, Heb. 4. 14. To conclude, pressing a duty upon the Gospel-Minister, I should not be ashamed to urge him that Text, *That the Priests lips should keep knowledge*, Mal. 2. 7. and hold it not unlawful to say, that he is the man that in the words is called *Priest*.

Ans. 4. Though it be a phrase not common in this Kingdom, to use the word *Priest* for a Gospel Minister; yet in some other Reformed Kingdoms, as in *Sweden*, I have certainly heard that there the common and ordinary appellation for their Pastors, is *The Priest*; a term with them no more disgraceful, nor unlawful, than Minister or Teacher is with us.

Ans. 5. All Christians that appear before God, may be, and are in Scripture called *Priests*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. and Rev. 1. 6. the word *Priest* is not in a particular, but in a principal way, given to Ministers; in respect that by their Office they approach nearer to God to offer up Sacrifices for the people. As all the *Israelites* in general, were *Priests* to God, *Exod. 19. 6.* which yet hindred not the sons of *Aaron* to be called in a principal way, by reason of their more immediate approach to God. And though the word may be cast upon us by some in scorne, (yet if they be Christians, they are Priests) it shall one day no more be to our shame, than it shall be a shame for our Saviour, that he was called by *Pilate*, *King of the Jews*, which indeed he was, though still we are called to but in an allusive way; and Elder, Priest, or Presbyter (all being one) being the more Ancient word, significant enough, holding forth our approaches unto God in a more particular or singular way for offering for the people, our fore-fathers were pleased to retain the word even in this Book.

Obj. 18. For all this, we cannot be brought from the apprehending that there is in your Common Prayer-Book, some appearance of evil; for men answering the Minister, and the women speaking in the Church, holds out to our thoughts an evil, and we ought therefore to abstain from it, or hold our peace.

Ans. 1. I suppose it was never heard that any were in the least troubled for not answering the Minister in the Congregation, and therefore in my judgement you may do as you please; but be sure that you be doing God service; it may be dangerous to be either idle, or scorning, or sleeping, or strolling in his Vineyard.

Ans. 2. In confession of our sins, there ought to be a particular application to our hearts, the better to raise them to a quick consideration of Gods Justice, which produceth repentance in the humbled and confessing souls, which is the cause of the Responses or answers of the Congregation. As for women, they are forbidden to teach or propound questions in the Church, but not to make prayers or supplications either with or for others.

Ans. 3. Whereas you say *you will abstain from it*, consider, that besides the danger you are in for not joyning with Gods people in publick, you also lose the knowledge, and possibly the comforts you may receive from the Word of God which is read with it: be well resolved, and know it is a sin for thee to slight, as it were, the Word of God, which is a real and apparent evil, because at that time there is joyned with it that that only appears to be evil.

Ans. 4. Holy *Taylor* in his *Saints Progress*, will have his Saint to avoid (in any indifferent thing) all appearance of evil and scandal, with these limitations: As,

1. *So they be not in things simply necessary to life*] in such things we must not forbear, though others be offended; if one should take offence at our eating bread, we must not care, since our life is preserved by it. And indeed, the Pharisees were more blamed for being offended at the Disciples eating or plucking the ears of corn, than the Disciples were for giving that offence; yet we may forbear this or that wine, and this or that flesh, out of respect to a weak Brother, these things not being necessary for our life, since the world is a plentiful board, at which we need not tie our selves to one dish.

2. *The like in things simply necessary for our calling*] A thing of indifferency may not put me out of the way; I must hold my calling whatever befall. To throw preaching off for a Surplice, which is but indifferent (since there is no colour appointed by the Lord, nor his Disciples) will prove one day a greater sin, than some now imagine that it is: It were better to stay with their stock, and preach the Word constantly in season, and out of season; than to run from them for that which is to be worn only at a certain season; and if it be thought Popish, because the Papists use it, the Creed may be thought Anti-christian since they say it, and black Idolatrous, since

3. *If we be not in things simply necessary to life*] If the things be left to our power, we may use them as we please, but if higher powers re-

